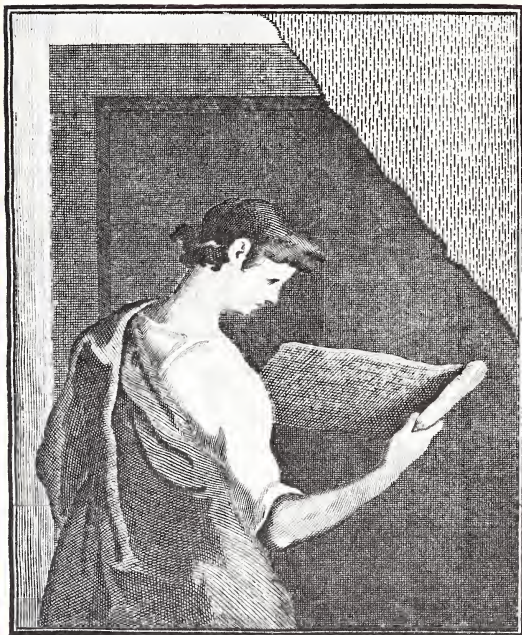

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TWO PLATES ILLUSTRATING “WOMEN AS PAINTERS”

1. THE VESTAL. By Angelica Kauffmann. Reproduced by arrangement with Mr. F. Hanfstaengl, from the Painting in the Royal Picture Gallery, Dresden.
2. PORTRAIT OF HERSELF. By Madame Vigée le Brun. Reproduced by arrangement with Mr. D. Anderson, of Rome, from the Painting in the Uffizi, Florence.

WOMEN AS PAINTERS

I WAS much puzzled some twelve years ago when I heard a well-known Academician speak at Oxford during his Slade Professorship. After delivering a course of lectures on etching, with practical illustrations, he announced that in the following year he proposed "to discuss Water-Colour Painting as an Art—*not* Ladies' Water-Colour Painting." As is usual at lectures, the audience consisted chiefly of women, and it was clear that the great man's sarcasm overwhelmed them duly. Circumstances over which I had no control prevented my attending the threatened discourses, but there can be little doubt that the room was once more packed with the same patient hearers, anxious to find out how to unsex themselves—artistically. The dilemma suggested by the Professor's words was a troublesome one. If Ladies' Water-Colour Painting was not Art, why did women flock to fashionable studios, to Ruskin drawing schools, and to State-aided South Kensington classes? Why should our sensible Government—which was always careful to prevent an over-enthusiastic Director of the National Gallery from spending too much money on any one first-rate picture—why should our sensible Government give huge grants to teach women painting if the result was not Art? Yet the Professor himself was a person of practical experience—a successful painter, a man whose cleverness in many fields was universally acknowledged, and a practical teacher in a school which he had specially adapted to developing Genius. Surely such a man ought to know what he was talking about?

Time, however, has had its revenge. The offspring of South Kensington increase and multiply exceedingly, the Society of Women Artists has just held its Forty-fourth Exhibition, and the Slade Professor has been publicly corrected by Mr. Pennell.

Nevertheless, that famous and fatal confounding of Etching with Photogravure was useful in one way. It opened a path of escape from the dilemma about Art and Ladies' Water Colours. If the Professor could be convicted of error in the matter of etching, on which he had actually written a book, was it not just possible that he was wrong about Ladies or Water Colours, on which he had not posed in public as an authority? There seemed to be room for independent investigation after all.

Little or nothing definite was to be gained from the study of contemporary work. We are too near to the painting of our own time to see it in true perspective, and can only judge it in relation to the things around us. The Art of distant ages can be viewed more broadly, and the good selected from the bad with some show of justice. It thus becomes necessary to consider the painting of women in the past, before making any forecast as to their artistic prospects in the future. We cannot expect, of course, to find them as a rule on an equality with men. If we are to believe its advocates, the sex has so long been regarded either as a plaything or as a presentable species of general servant, that its latent energies have invariably been suppressed or perverted. Yet, in the case of an artistic career, obstruction on the part of parents and guardians was never a feminine monopoly. It is a commonplace in artistic biographies to read how the young painter's taste was evident at an early age, and how his father opposed it; how the budding genius was put behind a counter, but was found to be wasting all his time in drawing, etc. etc. Indeed, on turning to the recorded careers of women-painters, we find that the reverse was actually the case. Almost all of them seem to have had an easy time, and to have been commissioned and flattered to their hearts' content. Many were the sisters or daughters of painters, and none seem to have lacked training; indeed, the average of their technical accomplishment is quite respectable. Too much importance, then, should not be attached to what is said of their difficulties. Nay, if the sex has hitherto been only the mere toy that some would have us suppose, mankind has at least always handled such toys carefully when they were found to possess marketable qualities.

Even when lesser names are omitted, the list of women-painters is no short one. Passing over the miniaturists, Susanna

Horeburt, Alice Carmellion, and Lavinia Terling, whom Henry VIII. kept in his pay, we meet with a long series of female artists in Italy—Sofonisba Anguissola of Cremona (of whose conversation Vandyck thought so much), and her sisters Lucia, Europa, and Anna Maria; Catarina Vigri of Bologna; Irene of Spilimbergo; Marietta Robusti, daughter of the great Tintoret; Barbara Longhi; Agnese Dolce; Lavinia Fontana; Galizia Fede of Trent; Artemisia Gentileschi; Rosalba Carriera, the pastellist; and Angelica Kauffmann, who was Italian by taste and training, though not by birth. France has produced Madeleine and Geneviève de Boulogne, Madame Vigée le Brun, and Constance Mayer, the friend of Prudhon. The last thirty years have, however, brought forward a large number of lady artists on the Continent, among whom Rosa Bonheur, Marie Bashkirtseff, Madame Cazin, and Madame Lemère may be taken to represent France, as Miss Tina Blau of Munich represents Germany. Denmark is responsible for Agnes Stott-möller, Anne Ancher, Harriet Backer, and Kitty Kielland; while in the Netherlands we can study the flower-pieces of Miss Rosenboom, and the work of Marie Collaert, "the Flemish Rosa Bonheur." In the past, Germany and Denmark seem to have had no women-painters of note; but in Holland, Maria Von Oosterwycke and Rachael Ruysch flourished at the end of the seventeenth century, and, later, among the first members of our English Royal Academy we find the name of Mary Moser, in addition to that of Angelica Kauffmann. Miss Mutrie and Miss Byrne followed in Mary Moser's footsteps, while Mrs. Carpenter was a successful portrait-painter during the first half of the present reign. It would be an invidious task to attempt a list of the principal English women-artists of our own time, but such names as those of the late Lady Waterford, Kate Greenaway, Mrs. Allingham, Lady Butler, and Clara Montalba are familiar even to the casual frequenter of exhibitions.

I am aware that this is by no means a complete record of the achievement of women in painting, but it is sufficient for the purpose in hand. An examination of Bryan's Dictionary or any other work of reference might add to its length, but would make no very radical change in its character. To analyse it properly, all contemporary workers must be omitted, for the

reasons already given. The result thus obtained is curious. Out of the twenty-six artists, eighteen were portrait-painters, seven flower-painters, while only two, Angelica Kauffmann and Constance Mayer, did more than occasionally attempt historical or allegorical subjects, and their success was not such as to call for further comment. Nor need the flower-painters detain us much longer. It may be fashion that makes us rank the painting of still-life below the painting of motion or thought. If so, the fashion is one for which there is something to be said. Flower-painting may be charming when perfectly done, but that is the most one can claim for it; and the extraordinary dexterity of a Van Os or a Van Huysum, or the taste of a painter like M. Fantin Latour, when restricted to such subjects, can only make a fleeting appeal to our senses.

Thus, if we are to consider the more serious side of feminine Art in the past, it is to the women portrait-painters that we must turn. There is no lack of respectable technical accomplishment. Almost all the Italian ladies came of painter families, and were trained from youth in the language of their craft. Angelica Kauffmann, with all her Dresden-china airs and graces, knew far more about methods and materials than most modern painters. Vandyck, speaking of his conversations with Sofonisba Anguissola, said he had learned more from a blind old woman than from the study of the great masters. The two pictures by Artemisia Gentileschi at Hampton Court show how thoroughly she was able to master the technique of seventeenth-century Italian painting. The charming portrait of herself by Madame le Brun in the Louvre is one of the most popular pictures in the world, and though it seems cold, "tight," and metallic when compared with really fine painting, it is a thoroughly sound piece of work. The portrait recently added to the National Gallery is not quite a happy specimen of the style of this accomplished lady, but it will at least serve to show that she had learned her business well enough to take a fair place among portrait-painters of the second order. Indeed, she was perhaps the most generally-talented of all female artists of the past, and her best work therefore may be taken to represent the high-water mark attained by women in painting up to the middle of the present century.

The sex, then, has produced no great artist of the first rank ;

nor any pioneer who can be said to have advanced the general knowledge of Art in a single particular, unless we are to find her among the moderns. The women who have been successful in painting have succeeded because they followed carefully the tradition of their time, and chose to paint portraits or flowers, where the model before them made any extended use of the imagination unnecessary. I think if a similar test were applied to the women artists of our own day, the result would not be far different; but before doing so, it may be worth while considering what women have done in literature and music, to see if any similar limitations are traceable.

The glorious fragments of the lyrics of Sappho that have come down to us, are, of course, beyond criticism. Generally speaking, as poets or novelists, women excel in the delineation of minute traits of character, or of the nervous and emotional side of their own sex. Miss Austen or Mrs. Gaskell might be cited as instances of the former kind of realism; Charlotte Brontë or Mrs. Browning as instances of the latter. When they attempt higher imaginative flights, the result is too often cold or shadowy. Does any one prefer *Romola* to *Middlemarch*? As actresses, women have continually been famous,—more famous, perhaps, than men,—but what woman ever wrote a great play? As musicians, they are often admirable vocalists and executants, but I should not like to have to prove, especially in *The Dome*, that there has ever been, or is, a great female composer. In fact the true genius of the sex is observant, tasteful, and teachable, but not creative.

Viewed in this light, Rosa Bonheur is seen to be only a clever follower of Troyon, as Marie Bashkirtseff was a follower of Bastien Lepage, as Lady Butler is a follower of De Neuville and Détaillé, or as Miss Montalba is a follower of Turner. I do not use the word follower in a depreciatory sense. In a complicated science such as painting, success can only be obtained by a proper use of the work of the men who have gone before. One might as well expect a treatise like Darwin's *Origin of Species* from a backwoodsman who had never read anything but *Lloyd's Newspaper*, as to think that a great picture can be produced by anyone who has not studied the pictures of a previous age. All great painters have imitated their predecessors for a time. What makes

them great is the personality which the technical experience so gained enabled them to express. With women, this personality does not seem to be strong enough to survive the labour of mastering the complicated processes of painting in oil. The beasts, for instance, in Rosa Bonheur's well-known "Horse Fair" are not less cleverly painted than the cattle in Troyon's big picture in the Louvre, but where in the lady's work are we to find a parallel for the majestic landscape in which those cattle are set? In fact, while certainly Troyon's inferior in feeling and colour, Madame Bonheur has added nothing of her own to what she learned from him;—and was Troyon himself an artist of the first rank?

In slighter and less exacting mediums this does not hold good to the same extent. I cannot think that Miss Kate Greenaway's fancy would have expanded so freshly had she worried her head about pigments, and glazes, and brushwork, and values, and textures, and all the other thousand troubles that beset the conscientious worker in oils. Her convention of simple outlines and simple washes of gay colour is all that her ideals require. It is a convention that calls for nothing more than taste and a very moderate amount of technical skill, so that her wits have been left free to think out her dainty compositions. Her choice of subject, too, is one so entirely in harmony with the sympathies of her sex, that one is astonished that women should continue to cherish masculine ambitions, when in the provinces to which they alone have constant access there is so much ground still unoccupied. It is to the retention of this essentially feminine sympathy that such drawings as those of Lady Granby or Mrs. Stillman owe their peculiar charm. In the same way, the early work of Mrs. Stanhope Forbes bears the stamp of a refined and observant womanliness. After she married, she became more ambitious, and is now only an imitator of her husband.

What, then, are we to think of our great national Art training schools, and the private "Professors" and studios that supplement them? Is the whole system a mistake, and, if so, what can be done to make amends? It would be ungenerous to ask those who have laboured so hard and so long to attain a very respectable average of technical skill, whether the game, as at present played, is worth the candle; whether they have anything but

hope by which to justify the tremendous expenditure of money and energy that they are lavishing upon painting? If a girl paints entirely for her own amusement, of course, so long as she can satisfy herself, she has no reason to regret the time happily spent in so doing; but in these days painting is popularly regarded as a "career" for woman. Thousands, in consequence, are trying to make a living by it, and many thousands more are hoping to try. For these a few hints from the fate of their predecessors may not be unwelcome.

In choice of subject they will do well not to forget the sympathies of their sex, and to avoid aiming at the heroic, the complicated, or the grandiose. If the painting of flowers and still-life is found unsatisfying or unprofitable, the portraiture of women, children, or animals will provide a wider field for their labour. Landscape requires such a philosophic holding of the balance between Art and Nature, that it should not be attempted except where some great master has indicated a path that can be followed simply and frankly.

In choice of style, the modern system of teaching places women at a great disadvantage. They study the work of all masters at once, and so learn the merits of none. I fancy that it would be better to restrict them to one, or at most two, first-class models, carefully chosen with due reference to the particular medium desired, to correct and encourage their personal tastes and preferences. No painter need, I think, feel insulted if she is told that she is imitating Velasquez or Titian too closely.

It is, however, in the choice of mediums that the need for reform seems most urgent. The complexity of the perfect methods of oil-painting has hitherto sapped the energies of all women (and of nearly all men) who have tried it. I think the women will be wise who can disregard its fascinations, and let their fancy find vent through some straighter channel, where the shoals and rocks and currents are less treacherous. One could express all that most artists ever want to express with outline and shadow, or outline and simple colour. Those whose imagination is too great for such plain methods will be strong enough to make their way unaided. The "revivals" of the last twenty years offer the student an ample choice of methods—the pen and ink of Art or commerce, etching, lithography, mezzotint, pastel, wood-

engraving (plain and coloured), silver-point, miniature-painting, etc.,—with a few good models in some of them. Granted the reasonable dexterity that comes of a sound early training, there is little in any of these media that a conscientious worker (women are usually *too* conscientious) could not master in a year or two. Their personality might then escape the danger of being lost in the routine of long technical exercises, and they would have a chance of expressing freely the talents peculiar to their sex.

One might sum up the whole matter by saying, "Be narrow!" Choose the one class of subject which you like, and stick to it. Choose one great model of style, and stick to him. Choose one simple medium, and use no other. Narrowness is only a reproach when it implies all-round limitation. In its best sense it is only another word for concentration, that discipline to which we must all submit until we blossom into Raphaels or Shakespeares. A man who thus contracts his mental horizon in order to see clearly the few things that come in his way, can at least console himself with the thought that Dante did the like. A woman has the still larger consolation of knowing that when she concentrates her powers, she has, as precedent, practically all the famous women of the past. Miss Austen and the Brontës, Mrs. Browning and Christina Rossetti, compel our attention by the closeness with which they cling to the country and the people that they know, to the emotions which they have seen or felt. The strength of *Wuthering Heights* or *Shirley*, of *Pride and Prejudice* or *Emma*, does not lie in grandeur of conception, or in consummate literary craft, but in that impression of absolute reality, of absolute knowledge on the part of the writer, which is only possible for one whose field is narrow. The modern fashion of teaching girls a little of everything has doubtless improved the mental average of the sex. Painting, however, is not a career for average minds, and cannot therefore be judged by the rules that apply to them. Is not this the mistake that our elaborate system of Art-teaching has made?

C. J. Holmes.

THE SIXTH FINGER

I

SIDWELL and I rose simultaneously. It was a fancy of Mrs. Forthe's to let the tea-hour dwindle into a mope of shadows, while the talk dwindled also, into nothingness.

I crossed to the lady.

"Politeness avoids a reverie," I pleaded.

"Real politeness?" she asked, in her quietly busy voice.

"Who can distinguish?"

She let go my hand as she answered lightly:

"Oh, the victim, of course!"

I turned. Sidwell was at my elbow, and Roberta was surely awaiting me. In the twilight, her pale dress made an important place for itself, and I guessed at the meaning of the lips whose lines I could not clearly trace: so much her attitude conveyed, so much and yet so little. She was the supreme actress of her sex, in my quick judgment; and yet magic in her frankness. She had a game to play, as all of us; and she had played it to the destruction of my pride in my reading of women, and of Sidwell's also, I guessed, recalling his long reticence. A linking condition was wanting: the girl had a secret.

"We may hope to see you again, Mr. Lockyer?" she said.

"Let my friendship with Sidwell alone declare," I ventured to reply.

Her hesitation was almost imperceptible.

"He is an old friend?" she asked in a lower tone.

"We believe we are always side by side."

"The fullest confidence?"

"The fullest which is necessary," I assured her.

We went into the hall glaring with light. A servant came

forward with my overcoat, then attended to Sidwell, who had bustled after us.

"I wonder," Roberta whispered to me.

A cut was intended, or the signifying of a harrowing need—which? For the first time I caught the green shade of her eyes, borne on the flashes, as it seemed. There was a direct challenge; an inquiry desperate and scornful; a hope which was condemned as smacking of weakness. The purse of her lips I found to be at once full and firm, the poise of her graceful figure was adorable.

"As to what is necessary?" I asked.

She nodded.

"Remember, it's man and man—with us."

"Good-bye," she said abruptly.

I guessed that she had caught Sidwell's eye, and I bemoaned a lost chance.

"Good-bye," I returned.

It seemed that the movement by which she thrust her hand well into mine was as keen as her voice, and, strangely, the clasp made me wince. So might a sibyl have impressed a prophecy upon the nerves: a warning without malice, perhaps in fear; a touch conveying a message not then comprehensible, neither cold nor eager, fateful. The slightest catch in her breath, the faintest heave of her bosom, a still farther penetrating of her eyes—these things, and then she dismissed me.

The wintry air of the streets kept our mouths tight shut as we headed into it. The sense of coming night, too, checked our tongues, as usual; the half-light offered nothing; the instinct was to look back and wait.

Of course the mystery of Roberta's hand was properly Sidwell's topic, not mine. I guessed he had taken me to the Forthes' house to prepare the way to—the Lord knew what! For I had detected his aloofment during those last weeks: a gentle aloofment at first, suggestive of a pious wondering, but quickly followed by a twitching rebelliousness, or an alert dodging of the fates. The man's thirty years had led him to a big doubt; it exercised my vanity to discover if my thirty-eight could lift him over the top of it. For I knew his depth. Never once had I succeeded in leading him, never once had he tried to lead me. The line of our friendship was midway between our respective

appreciations : he offered me what of himself he believed he understood ; for my part, I let him indicate the reservations of us both, and juggled the more freely with abstractions.

He favoured that fondness of mine the same night as we sat at table.

"How much may a man forget?" he asked.

"Of himself?" I inquired.

"No, of another."

"Nothing at all," was my assurance.

He glanced at me sharply, then turned his chair and looked away from me.

"Why?" he asked, after a lengthy pause.

"Because it's always there."

"Not if we don't seek for it."

I lit a cigar before answering.

"There's nothing else to seek for."

"Yes, if you like it," Sidwell remarked, "but" —

"What you like," I protested, interrupting him, "is, in a very true sense, already your own."

For some minutes we smoked in silence. I guessed the drift of his thought, and waited for him to make direct reference to the affair of the afternoon on which to all appearances it was based. That he was under the spell of the girl Roberta I could not doubt : so much I had in fact seen in Mrs. Forthe's drawing-room. And if there was doubt as to Roberta's state, it was for the reason that she impressed me as too insistent, too little elusive, for a lover.

"And has one always enough?" Sidwell asked at length.

"Enough to form an opinion upon," I answered.

"An opinion of the other?"

"Yes."

"But as to knowledge—knowledge of yourself?"

"Give me a case," I invited.

Sidwell turned to me, leaning upon the table.

"Did you notice Miss Forthe's hand?" he asked.

"I felt something strange." To my surprise, I found my tone as easy and as precise as his.

"Did you not—see?"

"No."

"She has six fingers."

His keen anxious eyes were belying his manner of speech, and at the moment I could not reply. The explanation of my own experience was too suggestively simple to be dealt with there and then. I felt again the curious enfolding of the girl's hand, its slender largeness, its supple cumbersomeness; and I began to picture it, to imagine the altered places of the white fingers, to see them grotesquely large and uncanny, almost inhuman. A wretched inquisitiveness possessed me.

"On both hands?" I asked.

"No; on the right only." His tone had become dull.

"Are the fingers well shaped?"

"Perfectly."

"There's nothing else"—

"No—nothing."

He started to his feet, and left me unnerved and ashamed. What hideous vulgarity had called forth those accursed questions? I had turned the man's soul sick with a senseless fear, and was debased to the squalid spirit of the showman.

I rushed to the head of the stairs.

"Sidwell!"

"Yes," he answered from the hall.

"Here—a moment."

He came up slowly, wearily.

"Forgive me," I begged.

"Forgive you, Lockyer?" He looked at me with curiosity.

"You're in love with her," I affirmed.

"Well?" he asked, half drily, half in bewilderment, as it seemed.

"The rest is nothing—nothing at all. Don't think of it!"

"Have we not got back to the original question?" was his rejoinder.

"In this case there is no need to forget."

He shook his head.

"You don't understand, Lockyer. All love-making is forgetting."

"Forgetting, man?"

"Forgetting all the rest of the world."

"Do you mean, you're afraid"—

I stopped, for I saw he understood me.

"What I am afraid of," he answered quietly, "is the publishing that would take place. Suppose that wherever we went, a dozen pairs of eyes were fastened on Roberta's hand, a dozen looks of surprise, or pity! I should feel my heart bared before a pack of scandal-mongers; I should begin to hate them, and fancy she was suffering; it is almost certain I should beg of her to go into hiding with me, and—well, who could stand that?"

A smile flickered over his face, and I wondered at the sensitiveness now made so hideously clear. I saw his suffering—the association of longing and fear; the consciousness of the apparent triviality of his doubts.

"People are not quite brutes," I protested.

"Brutes? Of course not. They're wise."

"And you, then?"

"Still wiser."

He laughed bitterly, and turned away. But again I called him back.

"Has anything passed between you?" I asked.

"Nothing—in words."

"But you fancy—?"

"Sometimes I'm sure of it."

Then I let him go.

For I believed I had fallen into the moiling, and was called upon to render decent account of myself. The difficulty was my strangeness to the Forthes'; my hope arose in the recollection of the mother's graciousness and glossy touch of things mental, to smooth the way.

It happened, too, that Sidwell was called away within the next twenty-four hours, to fulfil a mission sufficiently important to be but little referred to. With such equipment, I guessed the earliest possible visit to the Forthes' would no more than appear of doubtful intent: one could trust to one's luck to change the first face of things.

I found Mrs. Forthe alone, smitten with the absurdities of a new novel, and disposed to mix a balm of complaints for her wounds. For half an hour I served to link her speeches, discovering the while her unleavened shrewdness, her devotion to mere perceiving, her sublime disorderliness of thought. The lesson was salutary: she was all too ready to give to me of herself.

"These analyses of people, Mr. Lockyer," she remarked, "are so needless; I nearly said unpleasant, but of course we cannot nowadays hope for enjoyment."

She waited smilingly while I found a comment.

"We are almost forgetting to hope, I'm afraid."

"You're quite right: we indulge. Hope, of course, is a kind of abstention: it puts things off and makes the very longest novel possible. But this ferreting out of the smallest emotions—as if we were not all sinners, Mr. Lockyer—really, I think it is positively dangerous."

"Dangerous to truth?" I asked humbly.

"To the best truth," Mrs. Forthe made answer. "We must knock nonsense on the head; indeed, we had much better laugh at affliction than offer it for sale."

"Even if we buy from ourselves?"

"Even then—if that is possible. I can't think a thing is less objectionable because somebody says it for us. And I'm positively afraid for our girls: they're so alert, Mr. Lockyer, so highly strung—so bloodlessly impassioned, if I may use the expression."

A weft of anxiety ran through her voice as she spoke these last words, and I found it easy to follow her.

"A single misfortune," she went on, "quite perverts their minds; positively it would seem there's a tragedy in changing half-a-crown, and it's quite impossible to foretell if the aggrieved child's desire is to work for a Zenana or to extend the divorce laws."

Thus, though Roberta did not show herself to me, my call was not made in vain. Plainly, Mrs. Forthe had a trouble, and as plainly her daughter was the cause of it. The perplexing waywardness and difficult restraint had not been produced by a temporary means: they expressed the girl's usual condition, and must be dealt with as so doing. Nor could I consider the mother's reference to affliction to be haphazard. Without doubt she had fallen upon the girl's rebellious whim, and was puzzled to dispel it.

Indeed, the current to be stemmed appeared the stronger the more closely one saw its burden. I had some opportunities of watching. Sidwell's mission proved to be a long affair. A fortnight went by, and still he could not undertake to return.

He inquired of me as to the Forthes, and I gave him the information with which my two or three visits had rewarded me. But the news was scanty. I had not succeeded in obtaining a single moment of privacy with Roberta. The challenge of her voice, her manner, her hand, was still unrestrained; the faint tremor with which the touch of the six fingers had from the outset afflicted me was still my portion when we met and parted. More and more feverishly I waited for it, cursing my lack of restraint, half fearing the stricken, bitter face with which I was confronted. Sidwell's dread became less monstrous as I reckoned up the experience. The white ringless hand more and more fully betokened the victim.

It chanced that one day Mrs. Forthe was called from the room while Roberta was playing, for my delectation, a nocturne of Chopin's. As usual, the twilight was superseded only by the glow of the fire. From my place I could see the sudden fall of the player's head as she drew out the exquisite sense of the last phrase. In the pause which followed, the spirit of the music seemed to lie within the shadows, the rosy shine of the furniture touched by the firelight, and the murmur of the streets. The room had been transformed: we had discovered an emotion immeasurably beyond the common.

Roberta touched the keys again, then suddenly sprang to her feet and held by the piano.

"That piece is a lie!" she declared.

Straight, rigid, defiant, she stood, yet hard-breathing through her parted lips.

I had no answer ready for the mood.

"It means that sorrow has a beauty of its own," she added: "that loss is also gain, and gain a help to loss."

Again she paused.

"I say it's a lie! There are losses that canker the heart and poison the blood—they sting and rot for ever."

It was the most impassioned speech I had ever heard, and the most suggestive of retorts: its very violence made it bearable.

"Which losses?" I ask steadily.

"The most obvious," was the quick answer.

It was a supreme confession, worthy for its hard honesty; at last, I guessed, I had her measure. A sense of the enormous gulf

between our respective inabilities bit into my soul, and I could have awarded the palm for virtue on the strength of a throw of the dice. I declared to a decent indifference to appearances; the girl asked the most therefrom.

"It is the loss and not the mere deprivation which counts, I suppose?"

"In the woman's case they are one and the same. Look!"

She stretched out her right hand to show me its abnormality, laughing the while a grating, nerveless laugh. Finding me speechless, she sat near me, on the floor, and peered into the fire. Her manner now was as the chill of late autumn sprung upon the heat of summer.

"Think of it," she muttered; "too many fingers—too many touches, too many desires!"

She won me with the terrible strangeness of her imagination.

"Each finger has its own desire—each of the five. The sixth is a spoiler, and the hand is cursed: it's half a new sense which cannot get into possession."

"Then there is a gain," I affirmed.

"Even half a sense means a new world," Roberta answered, more sadly. "I touch you, and I have a hint of what no one has knowledge; you touch me, and you are afraid. No, it is all loss," she added, sighing. "It is so easy to feel too much."

I remembered the grounds of Sidwell's fears, and wondered at the two far different arguments. Still, I left the house with lessened apprehensions. The interview had made its mark, but instinctively I knew that the end had not come. If, as I had felt, I was in the moiling, at least I was not helpless. Mrs. Forthe had returned to us on a flood of light, and the farther behind me the house was, the more strongly I was convinced that a wave of that flood was following me. She had brought the needful sense of real things; the intrepid argument of Roberta had wrapped me in a coil of chill fancy, squeezing the power of observation, checking inclination to penetrate through the shadows. For the moment she had won submission; her vivid assurance had shaped and stiffened her fears; reason had fallen back before pity. Then Mrs. Forthe's kindly freedom of speech had cut in halves the impression, making a breach which grew ever wider as I looked back upon the scene. The chance, rather than the

experience, of a stronger vision showed with the situation ; but it sufficed to point out the possible errors and to suggest a way to the necessary explanations. The girl had spoken in hopelessness ; but hopelessness of what ? She had sung a dirge upon her woes ; but had she made them known ? The sixth finger had been proclaimed as a hideous barrier ; but it was not a barrier, surely, to every possible course ? In the clearer view it seemed certain, indeed, that Roberta had discovered Sidwell's repellent sense. She had felt his love and asked for it, waiting for the declaration even while denying the hope, until the promise had fled, and in her desolation she had accounted for it in the easiest way.

But this explanation demanded another for its own support. For was it not likely that the girl would in the first instance have detected his dread of her abnormal hand ? If she loved him, and it was her love which had spurred her to a demonstration before me, the passion must have come in spite of the physical shrinking to which the lover had confessed, of which he must have given proof to the girl herself. What, then, of her pride ? Could it be that the deformity was so real to her, she could excuse its burdening of another, and offer herself on the very lowest terms ?

The thought stirred me to rebellion. I remembered Sidwell's intimation that marriage with her was likely to induce a hasty retirement. In the name of God and man, why ? A more beautiful feature than that one additional finger I had never looked upon : faintly tapering, firm, and supple, like its fellows, it was, taken singly, a delight to the eye. The whole white hand, so often still, seemed to possess an ineffable power of caressing. It at once attracted and restrained, suggesting infinite satisfactions when the sense of strangeness was overcome ; belittling the narrowness of one's expectations. Yet there was the alarming sensation of its touch to be remembered—the soft hostility, the conscious shock. Sidwell had failed to overcome it ; but could it not be overcome ?—nay, could it not be transformed into a gratification, the richer for the preliminary effort ? Experience alone could prove : a more frequent intercourse, deliberately had, carefully watched over ; perhaps to be rewarded with unimaginable satisfactions ; certainly to fix my own estimate of the case, if not to suggest an estimate to the absent lover.

Mrs. Forthe sounded me on the subject of his absence, in Roberta's presence.

"Tell me about the runaway," she demanded, in her easiest manner.

"His word is that he will return in a few days," I answered.

"What is it—a death?"

"Well, a property."

"His own?"

"And the Government's."

Roberta crossed the room, and took up a scrap of lacework which apparently had vied with a book for her attention. I turned to her, but Mrs. Forthe was too quick for me.

"Why, the man must be a millionaire!" she exclaimed.

"Oh! his wife will help him to spend it," I answered, laughing, and rising to depart.

The suggestion was as deterrent as I meant it to be. Roberta's cheeks went a shade paler, I thought; but she volunteered with a perfect self-control to let me out.

"Has Mr. Sidwell been much bothered?" she asked when we were out of ear-shot.

"Only the usual bother," I assured her. I thought it worth while to add: "He has several times asked after your mother and you."

"Then you will thank him for us, please?"

"If you think he will like it."

She looked at me searchingly, almost appealingly, I fancied; and I was forced to accept her mood.

"*We* are not very old friends," she said, attempting a smile.

"Aren't you measuring by years?"

"No; by experience."

The avowal was wonderfully frank. The girl's eyes were still fixed firmly on mine, and obviously repudiated all doubtful inference. They told me she was aware that I believed her in love with Sidwell, and, without admission or denial, reminded me that I had no evidence to support my contention. I was bidden to treat her as heart-whole and free. And perhaps it was the urgency of her communication which dulled my sense of touch when I held her hand. Certain it is, at all events, that I had no disposition to shrink from the contact. The fingers lay in mine lightly, easily,

warmly, perhaps assuredly. The strange, weird fulness was there, but without fault—fitly placed, generously stirring to the nerves. In those few seconds a world of change was made known : under the same conditions, the girl would ever be handicapped, to my gain. The sense of disadvantage had gone, and in its place a mysterious confidence had come : an intimation of a future flawless delight, and no less a dim warning to look ahead and note the signs. It was a revelation the possession of which I could not so much as hope to conceal.

But what were the conditions? I put the question to myself as I stood that night, half-hidden by a pillar entwined with flowers, in Lady Wenton's ballroom. The Forthes were there, and Roberta had just gone by on the arm of our hostess's son. His thick-set, nerveless frame had served well to emphasise the *spirituelle* attractions of his companion ; their jollity served no less well to aid me in my task. Plainly it was not in her present mood that the woman—the term came naturally now—had startled my hopes ; if her person bore a richer hue, it did not help to strike more truly the note of her individuality. Here she had put the deeper self aside. The Roberta of the afternoon had no place in that assembly, I declared : the woman with whom for a moment I had been intimate, had stepped down from her pedestal, for the benefit of any who might come across her. What, then, were the conditions? Were they not a recognition of my easy holding of her hand, the evident absence of all shrinking from its touch, a demonstrated pleasure in the novel experience? These things I had unwittingly signified to her ; in return, she had allowed herself just to hint at fervour in her dealings with me. She had seen my appreciation, loyal alike to her charms and to Sidwell ; she had recalled the more vividly his physical aversion, and on an impulse she had rewarded me with a flash of the dearest hope at her disposal. So I reasoned with myself, but not without misgiving. In recollection of Sidwell, the quickening sense I had experienced was not to be taken lightly. He was in love with her, and would sooner or later refuse to allow his nerves to play the fool with him ; he would find, as I had found, that the woman's hand was as little harmful as her mind ; nay, that the harm was in the super-sensitive creature who allowed his anticipations to run away with his judgment.

But here I recalled my own first experiences. Never until that day had I touched Roberta's hand without wincing. I recalled, too, her reference to the half-sense which the additional finger gave her. At that time I had taken the reference to be purely fanciful : an exercise of the imagination in a unique situation. Now another possibility seized me and held me prisoner. Suppose she could exercise at will some peculiar power with which the malformed hand endowed her? Might not the half-sense he represented, objectively, by an ill-defined force—a subtle, bewildering influence eminently serviceable to check the unwelcome companion or the suspected? Sidwell had said that at times he was satisfied Roberta was in love with him. But suppose he had stupidly misread her, or that—miserable thought!—she was at heart a flirt? Take, too, Mrs. Forthe's opinions on the girl of the age : had they not been inspired by her daughter's conduct, the daughter whom she had so little understood as to credit with bloodless passion, when possibly, through sheer stress of feeling, she was playing a fantastic and not very creditable game? It was going far merely to admit the possibility of such an explanation ; perhaps it was unjust. And yet—

Lady Wenton was coming towards me at a quick pace, and looking less stout and more stricken than I had ever before seen her. She seized my arm and led me to a settee, on which we both sat. Even the abundant ornaments she wore had lost their caste.

“ Mr. Lockyer, I've—I've terrible news for you ! ”

I saw she was struggling with her words, and could but wait for her announcement.

“ Mr. Sidwell ”— she hesitated.

“ Sidwell ? ” my heart leaped.

“ There's been an accident ; he's ”— Again she stopped, leaving me horror-stricken.

“ You don't mean that he's—he's dead ? ”

“ He's dying ! ” She could just breathe the words.

“ Dying ? My God ! Where ? ”

“ At Fainton. My husband's had a wire. ”

I called to young Wenton, who was passing alone, then rushed from the room. In the hall I met Roberta, pale as death.

“ You've heard, Mr. Lockyer ? ” she asked, piteously, I thought.

"Yes," I answered, catching the iciness of my tone.

Ready to depart, I turned impulsively, and found her looking hard at me, her mouth pursed yet tightly compressed, her eyes penetrating and inscrutable.

"I'm going to him," I said, somewhat subdued by the sight. "Is there anything?"—

She cut me short with a wave of the hand, and turned away, not, apparently, unnerved, but nerveless; overwhelmed and yet unconquered; the picture of a seer content to wait.

II

The thing proved to be an ending: a hand-clasp, and all was over. In the hush which followed, a telegram came from Roberta, "Send us the latest news." I sent it, and prayed for the hour when I might leave the scene. The place was strange to me; the other members of the family present—a mere suggestion. Sidwell had most often slipped by them, to their resenting and his own incomplete satisfaction. For while duty had taken root in his soul, an ultra-sensibility had bandied him about: he was one of those who never find themselves, there is so much to find. A woman's love would have directed him; a woman's indifference, when he loved, would have cleared his sight. To mere friendliness he owed very little, and he never knew the quality of Roberta's feeling for him.

Nor I, at that time, as I was reminded on my homeward journey. A difficult curiosity possessed me, and added to the desire to see the Forthes which loneliness aroused: I was bent on gauging the girl's condition: in the shock of loss I knew no more.

She received me in a room of books and prints, which took the morning sun through a lanky window: good on the further ground that it led the eye to a scrap of green and a tracery of boughs.

"I've waited a long time for this." She smiled as she spoke and gave me a hand of delicious touch, yielding yet persuasive. Her cheeks were colourless, but her look was unwearied.

"For this?" I echoed.

"For you," she explained richly.

A silence followed, edged with the smothered sounds of the street traffic. Across the firelight, the sixth finger lay outstretched on a dark lap, drawing the sunshine the while it drew my gaze. It told once again poor Sidwell's story, which had been lost, for me, in the melancholy of his death; it made a living truth of the tragedy of his and Roberta's sensibilities—a tragedy which I had conceived as fully played, but now was disposed to believe in the making, for the girl. So instinct prompted, and unnerved me. I guessed that no other could claim a friendship with her as intimate as mine: it was impossible to think of her as dependent upon the desire, the surprise, and the wonderment of one of her sex. Of necessity, it seemed, her dealings were direct, for love, or hate, or unimpassioned interest. And, by inference, I was brought into a closer relation which it was ridiculous to try to define: the conditions were so vague, the mystery of her thought so much greater than before. I spoke at a venture.

"Shall I tell you what little story there is?" I asked.

"There is a story?" I found it hard to meet her look.

"As always."

"No more than that?"

"No."

She paused before giving her decision.

"That story I know," were her sharp-cut words.

"It would not be hard to guess it," I agreed.

"After experience of such occasions, you mean?"

"Or before, if"—I broke off, conscious of my error. It was always her gift to lure me to speech; her mouth hinted some exultation now.

"If?" she repeated.

"Do you forget that it was Sidwell who brought me here?" I asked, spurred by her insistence.

She was round upon me in a trice—alert, persuasive, keen.

"Can't we avoid the preliminaries?" was her question.

"The preliminaries?" I echoed in surprise.

"Death may make a bond between those left behind," she answered. There was the fall of appeal in her voice—a hint of need unshaped by the words or her look, yet plainly existing, inviting inquiry.

"A further bond in our case, is it not?" I asked.

She turned to me stealthily, slowly enough to give time for the anticipation of the full hold of her gaze while yet it was coming. Eye to eye we sat, she beyond consideration of appearances, as it seemed; I in growing fear. There was a meaning in her look which I could not find, an intimation of an insight as deep, or deeper, than my own; and withal a compulsion half-gladdening, at least. I could have declared it a confession of solemnest desire. I could have believed it merely the play of acutest knowledge. What at first seemed need was translated into passion while one looked, then knowledge sprang forward and threw a cloak over it, once more the longing freed itself. A dozen repetitions of the inevitable game in as many seconds, a dozen vague intimations to me that a directing hand must be offered, or no settlement was possible—a hand as guileless as her desire, as powerful as her own.

So for a minute we sat; then a sharp laugh escaped her, and the vision was gone,

"Then we are old friends?" she cried; and I recalled the former scene when the expression had been used.

"You have said it," I answered, painfully beset.

"The mantle which was shared by you and Mr. Sidwell, you can now share with me! Why not? Even Mrs. Grundy will not gossip at that. I wonder if I shall know when it's on my shoulders."

She sprang to her feet, and, walking to the window, stood with her back to me looking out. Somehow I was aware of the quick rise and fall of her bosom; somehow I found, amid the chaos of emotions, an assurance of her sorrowing. It forced me to her side, though my instinct was to pretend to complete ignorance of the varied revelations she had made, distrusting them as too active possessions. Further, the deathbed scene was still something more than a memory. How much of Roberta's feeling was drawn from it, who could say? In pity I stood beside her, and pity prompted speech.

"Roberta"—she started at the familiar address—"Sidwell loved you!"

The intimation was abrupt enough; and with the utterance of the words I looked for her perturbation. But I experienced

only my own, at the sight of her rigid calmness. She turned to me more pale than I had ever seen her, her eyes bright without fieriness, the brows raised slightly above their normal height, her lips firmly pressed together. The look was not surprise, nor loss, nor fear, yet a mingling of these, the while another spirit informed them all, and proved its dominance—a spirit whose mission I learnt at the same moment, even before she spoke her undaring reply.

“Thank you,” she said, and the words left her lips tenderly.

“And you” —

“Hush!” she whispered, interrupting me. “Long ago I lost my hope.”

“Your hope?”

“The woman’s hope.” Her voice was growing. “We women know ourselves too well!”

She saw my bewilderment, and explained.

“Don’t you understand? There is always that in us which we fear—it eats into us the more if we’re alone. It may be sin, it may be physical detriment—it does not matter: we fear it—fear that it may twist our thought and blight us. So we hope for one that does not fear us—one who will make us forget fear, the cankering fear which is our curse.”

She had left me, and now her voice was from a great distance, it seemed.

“Men will not understand, and women will not say, but oh, how simple the truth is! We’re told glibly that love casts out fear: those we know say love *is* the casting out of fear. And woman must fear: it’s her woman’s part. Sometimes she may free herself, most often man frees her. Nature meant it so—it is so; it will ever be so!”

“And you?” The question was forced from me.

“I?” The tone suggested a rush of recollection, a return to the present. It startled me to the dread of a declaration which could do more harm than good; but her words were at once soft and defiant.

“I feel sometimes that all women are in me.”

The statement was simple enough, but it contained too much for my immediate reply. Nor could I stay there silent to her soul-confessions. Turning, I found her looking into the fire, her

head bent, her hands gripping the mantelpiece. So she remained the long while I waited to say my good-day.

“Roberta!”

Impulsively she offered her hand.

“You must go?”

“I’ll come again.”

There was a catch in her breath, and her fingers closed over mine with strange caress, innocent as meaning, tender yet restrained. Hours later the touch remained, while I sat in my room and turned about the state of things. They bore a significance which was hard to accept, they raised a question which was by but few degrees less hard to answer. Through the gloom of Sidwell’s death the intimation had dared to shine, it seemed, infusing with its white light the mass, not focussed to pierce the cloud: a sufficient intimation, excused, I was willing to allow, by the bitterness of the case. She had discovered her lover’s fear—that thin fear he had made known to me; she had decreed it the expression of the world’s distaste; she had rebelled, and quickly afterwards held by my apparent freedom from the thrall. The sequence was not to be wondered at, the outcome perhaps as inevitable. I had not encouraged her, but, on the other hand, it was likely I had shown my appreciation: so much, indeed, it had been my desire to show—so much because it was all I could admit even to myself. I admired her, I felt for her, I could have actively sympathised with her. But no sympathy on one count was needed: Sidwell’s death had not changed her point of view; a new issue had arisen—an issue I could not evade. Nor, in knowledge of the case, did I wish to evade it: a frank facing of it was imperative, and as frank a communication of the discovery as possible. I had gone to her with credentials: there was some guarantee of the desirable in friendship with Sidwell; I had followed up my advantage without careful planning; now I was at the fork of the road, while she watched, and, so to speak, the midday sun poured down on us. A single step, and I should be at her side, or lost to her for ever. At one moment the sixth finger beckoned me, at the next it pointed, stiff and fierce, at my heart. I denied it everything but beauty; I looked into Roberta’s face, then into myself. Quickly I knew for a certainty her image was not there: her trust in the subtle shelter I could offer—her

love, perhaps—could not be accepted. That, I decreed, she must learn at once.

So to inform her was the purpose I had when next I called on the Forthes. The hostess and young Wenton formed the company, sitting *tête-à-tête*, significantly, I thought; the lady's look a trifle over-serious, the man plainly without his conventional covering of reserve. Soon Roberta entered, queenly, as pale as when I had last seen her, and as surely as ever the magnet of Wenton's eyes. I watched the play between them strenuously, conscious that Mrs. Forthe watched me; I noted the happy flush of the man's cheeks, the generous courtesy of the girl's manner: on the one side simplicity, candour, robust health; on the other, deep-seeing gratitude, nervous vigour: a living antithesis, joinable doubtless by warm compromise. Was that to be the experience?

Mrs. Forthe's farewell to him told me much.

"Come and see me in the morning, if you have a moment to spare." She glanced at me before adding, showily: "We never have too many visitors then, you know."

When he had gone, she made an excuse to leave us, touching, as by accident, Roberta's shoulder, while passing her. I thought the girl shuddered; a closer look informed me she was as immobile as marble. I could but wait for her to speak.

"My mother has a great liking for Mr. Wenton," she said at last in a poor voice.

"He's a good sort, I think."

"You like him?" She was looking hard at me.

"Yes," I assured her. "Don't you?"

"Yes."

Her tone invited me to proceed, and I went at a hazard:

"Perhaps I have not the right to ask?"

"Why?"

"Isn't he in love with you?"

"Yes."

"And your mother approves?"

"Yes." The answers were bare of suggestion, but finding by my silence that something was demanded of her, she added:

"That is a great deal, you think?"

"There is but one thing greater in a woman's view, I should say."

"The one thing that is so often denied her!"

"Is it often denied her?" But there was little heart in my question, and she flashed out at me:

"Who knows it better than a man, when he will? Have I not told you that women fear? Fear implies power as well as need—the power to feel: an unfathomable power."

The fire within her was roused again; I was bidden see once more what manner of woman she was. With sureness the full truth was being unfolded before me. She demanded that I should know because she was compelled. Then, might I not be curious?

"But is it not that power to feel which should check her?" I asked.

"Check her—check her from accepting what she needs!" She stood before me, drawn to her full height, defiant, impassioned, overwrought, proud in her transcendent confession, driven to the danger of its difficulties. For the moment I had lost sight of the one fact which by any possibility could bridge the inconsistencies, now I was reminded of it by the pliant hand locked in its fellow before her. One lover she had lost, stricken with the sense of her disadvantage, afraid of solitude, while defiant of society. In pity I took the troubling hand in mine.

"Are you sure you know what you need?" I asked. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I know." No response was ever more solemn, none more readily to be accepted.

"Is it another's love, more than your own?"

There was the catch in her breath which I had heard before, the while she met my look, searching in it, as I felt, for all that I had failed to say, and finding it all. Then wearily her hand was freed and she turned away. And so perfect was the answer, so assured the declaration that now she knew me as herself, I was impelled to appeal to her for my own relief.

"Roberta—you understand?"

In answer she looked at me for one full moment, then, laying her hands on my shoulders, she drew me down and touched my forehead with her lips, while something in her grasp brought back an old chilling distrust—a something which came and went and came again in a flash of time.

"Let that tell you," I heard her mutter, and I was bidden go without another word or sign.

Two years went by before we met again. I had heard of her marriage to young Wenton eighteen months before, and had offered my congratulations: it had been easy then to turn aside from the affair. She knew herself too terribly well to believe that there would be satisfaction to either her or myself in a patched-up friendship, I decided; and certainly I was not inclined to undertake impressive experiments. There was, perhaps, still something to be explained—some touch of impulsion to be traced. And why had there been a suggestion of the old uncanniness in the pressure of her hand when last I had taken it? The sixth finger was as mysterious as ever; I proclaimed its power almost daily—to myself, of course. And while my interest in Roberta grew dimmer under the shadows of the dead months, the hold of the experience she had afforded remained steady, arousing, informing.

The sight of her, however, was transforming. A dull winter by an unsettled Mediterranean had not inspirited my nerves, and the nearness of friends was no longer a condition to be shelved for the gain of a promising climate. Paris, too, was brighter than I had been in the habit of finding it, and I was reasoning with myself as to the wisdom of taking it by its corners during the next couple of days, at the moment we came face to face. We were in the Place Vendôme, then almost deserted. The sun was behind the buildings; in the half light the sense of city life was the least possible, and made our meeting as easy as might be. For she had changed, and I needed to study the change. At the first glance I knew that we were about to make the last pretences of friendship; at the touch of her hand I knew that the Roberta of the library with the lanky window was dead. And yet it was necessary to walk with her up and down our side of the *place*, if only that one might rivet the attention on the points of change in her appearance, might catch the exact value of the new inflections in her voice, might ascertain how much of her new womanhood had come through the insight of marriage, and how much, if any, through a loss which, I guessed, she refused to face. She was at once older and younger—older, in so far as, obviously,

she could go bargain more readily for what the world could supply; younger, in so far as she took more from the surface of her experiences. A score of references to her husband, to her baby, now for the first time left to another's sole care, to the routine of her life—these told of the woman of practised manners; a score of inevitable indications of the excitement our meeting had aroused, told of the woman not yet fully armed against the fascinations of a past order of things. But she made a worthy effort to hoodwink me.

"Do you know, Mr. Lockyer," she said, "I have often wondered if you were angry with me the last time we met?"

It struck me that her voice was unusually mellifluous, and for the moment I was taken aback.

"I wondered if I had offended you in some way?" she added, turning to me the while, the light of her eyes faintly veiled, her mouth touched with a venturesome smile.

"Did I wrong myself so much?" I stood still as I spoke, and we faced one another. Roberta was struggling with herself, I could see.

"You knew so little," she told me, in a voice not so firm but that my laugh was drawn, as I echoed:

"So little?"

She laughed too, but more hardly than I could have believed possible—a laugh that somehow had a horrible kinship with the costly and fashionable garments she wore; which was as easily acquired.

"I wonder if I might so far destroy your vanity?" she cried; then asked more needily: "May I tell you?"

I urged her to, conscious of a sudden that now the mystery attaching to her would be swept away, that underneath her mask of worldliness a strenuous need was impelling her to a confession which would relieve.

"Look!" was her reply; and, taking off the glove of her right hand, she displayed the exquisite gems on her fingers. Then, interpreting my bewilderment, she cried: "How much money there is there; how much elsewhere?"

"Elsewhere?"

"Where my mother is!" Her lips tightened even as she laughed. "The parent supports the child; the child supports

the parent! You risk your life for love—why not for money? It's a life in any event, or may be!"

She was cutting the pair of us with her bitter raillery, to the fuller proof of her hideous sacrifice, which yet I felt I must still more fully know.

"You sold yourself to find money for your mother?"

If there was anger in my voice, it was not directed towards her, as she must have known. Nevertheless, a rigid look sprang upon her face.

"Don't you forget that I am happy?" The words were from a distance, chill, incisive, penetrating, and as she spoke them she offered her gloveless hand. Had decency allowed it, I would have refused the clasp. Nor, perhaps, were my apprehensions ill founded. Her eyes flashed inscrutably, and—was it my fancy that I could feel the play of her fingers before they were well within my own? Anyhow, to my amazement she withdrew them, while she uttered a smothered cry, and her head fell. I went nearer her.

"Roberta!"

"Forgive me!" Her voice was scarcely audible.

"You are happy?"

"Yes—quite." Even at that moment we were finally cut apart.

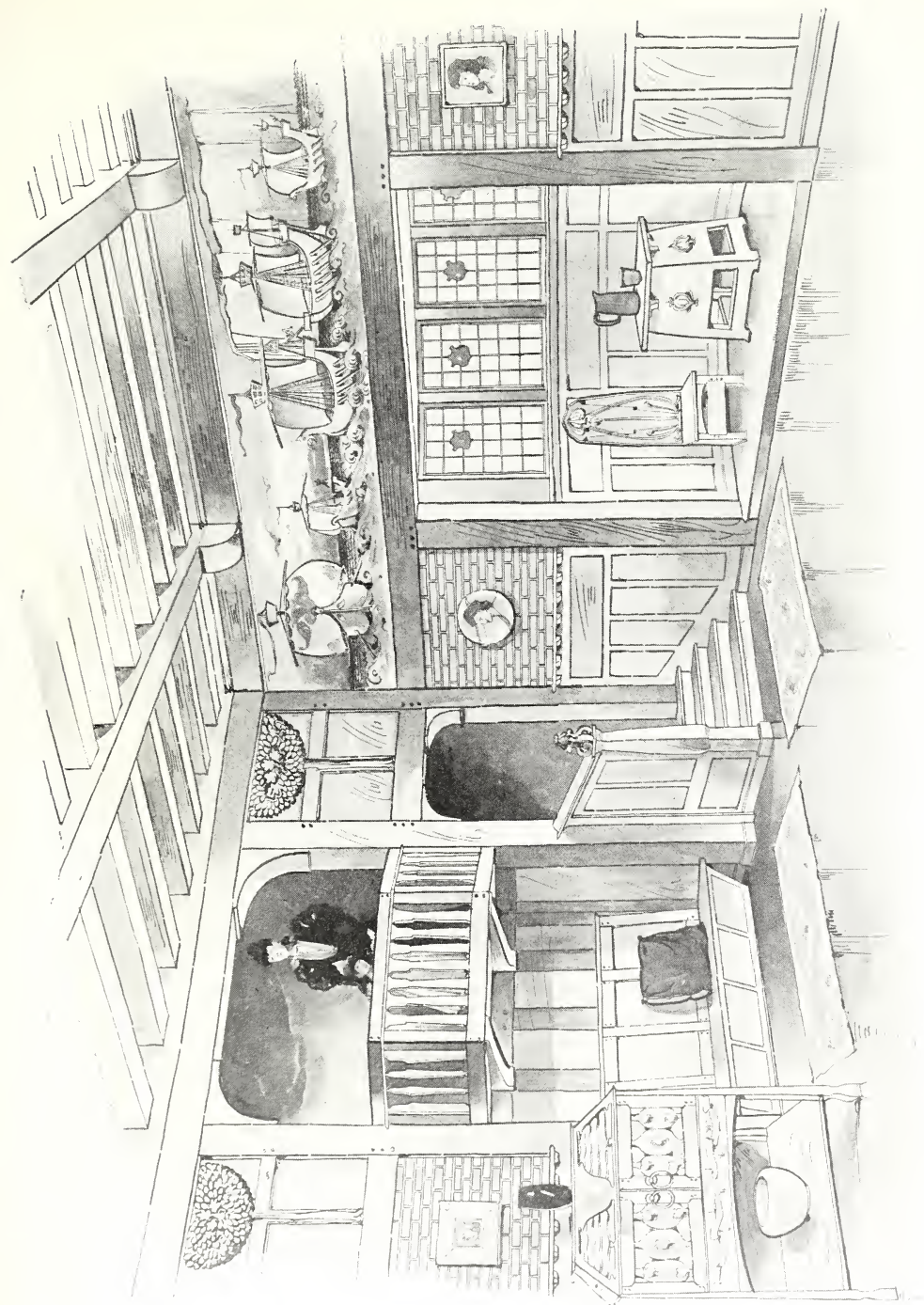
Afterwards I asked myself how much of the mother—the young unburdened mother—there was in that assurance, and gained the information from every available source that young Wenton and his wife were the happiest couple in the world. At the time I knew only that a wondrous hand caressed mine with its subtly generous touch—that, and I was left alone.

Arthur H. Holmes.

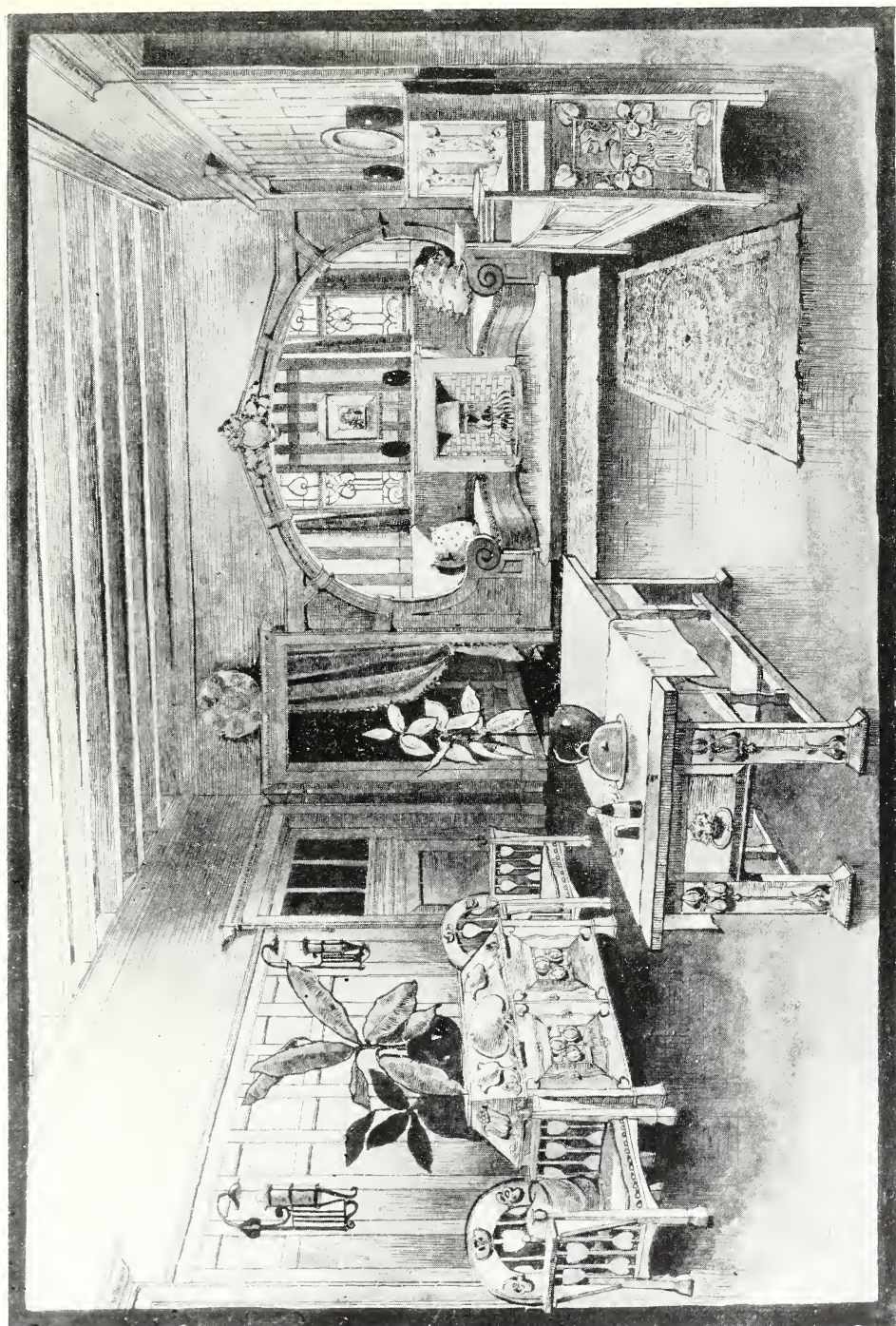
FOUR PLATES ILLUSTRATING
“THE HALL”

Nos. 1, 2, and 4 are after Drawings by Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler. No. 3 is after a Fresco by F. W. Davis.









THE HALL

THE Master-builder of *The Dome* has asked us to put forward a few designs and suggestions for the treatment of the Hall in the modern house. It will help us if we briefly recall the history of this apartment.

In the Middle Ages, when men of wealth and importance found it necessary, for the protection of their lives and goods, to surround themselves with crowds of retainers, the Hall naturally came to be the most important part of the house. It was in the Hall, for instance, that a great lord ate the evening meal in common with his guests and dependents. The high table, for the host and the more important visitors, was placed at one end of the room, while boards on trestles for the diners of lesser degree ran down either side. The High Table stood upon the Dais, and beside it, usually in a bay-window, was an elaborate piece of furniture on which shone the silver plate and other goodly vessels for the service of the feast.

A Screen of oak or stone at the entrance formed a corridor or passage-way from the outside, and from this main corridor cross passages ran past the buttery and pantry to the kitchens behind. A Music Gallery was constructed at the top of the screen and over the offices.

The Hall was lofty. The roof was often of open timber richly moulded and carved, and the walls were hung with tapestry representing hunting scenes, or familiar passages from romantic or Biblical stories; though, as time went on, these costly hangings gave place to panels of oak wainscot or coverings of stamped leather. The fireplace, one of the most important features of the ancient Hall, was huge of size, and lordly of aspect with its hood and shelf and shields of arms or other heraldic devices. Curiously wrought andirons bore the big oak logs, and the smoke was carried

away up a cavernous chimney. From the antlers of stags hung hats and cloaks, and weapons of war and the chase adorned the walls, while books of devotion and the few romances of the time might be found in the recesses of the bays.

Such was the Hall of the Middle Ages, the centre of the household's varied life. But with the dawn of a less turbulent day, the house slowly adjusted itself to the growing refinement and luxuriousness of its owners, and, under Elizabeth, the Hall, although it still retained much of its grandeur, began to be used chiefly as a reception-room and as an approach to the other apartments. Little by little it came to be regarded as of smaller and ever smaller importance in the planning of the house, until it degenerated into a mere passage and a place to contain the Staircase.

Of late years, however, the Hall as a central feature has been revived, but with too common a tendency to make it a show-place and to use it largely as an ante-chamber to the various living rooms. With some architects it is also the fashion to make the Staircase the most prominent thing in the Hall, and galleried staircases running to the top of the house are by no means rare. Now, if the house is large enough to allow of the sacrifice of a room to mere display, there can be no overwhelming objection to this method of treatment, although it is against the precedent of even the best Elizabethan and Jacobean houses, in which the Staircase was so placed as not to interfere with the use of the Hall as an apartment. But we are writing for the man of moderate means who has no money to waste on the ostentatious, and would feel that a Hall of the galleried type was too draughty and too much lacking in privacy to be of practical value as a room. We will therefore try to indicate the desirable features of a Hall in a house of moderate dimensions.

It must not be a mere passage, but a room with some pretensions, though not such as to make the other rooms appear insignificant in comparison. At least two purposes must be answered by it:—it must be an ante-room to the more important apartments of the house, and must itself be an apartment which can take, at ordinary times, the place of the more formal drawing-room, and on state occasions become a useful adjunct to it. While it affords access to the upper floors, it must be more than a room

to contain the Staircase. A fireplace of fair size is indispensable, and a cosy ingle-nook is very desirable.

If a first-floor room can be spared, the Hall may, with advantage, be carried up two storeys. But open galleries should be avoided. For half a dozen steps or so the Staircase may have an open balustrade, ending on a half-landing with a bay-window wide enough for a seat; but the cosiness of the hall will be preserved if the Staircase is enclosed, for the rest of its journey, between walls, though a quaint effect may be obtained, without loss of cosiness, by occasional apertures, fitted with casements, from which peeps into the Hall may be enjoyed. A two-storeyed Hall also gives an opportunity for a Music Gallery, formed by throwing out from one of the passages upstairs a small balcony with open tracery.

The light of day should not be admitted in too garish abundance. It may enter through a deep-bayed window, with leaded panes of lozenge or quarry or some other quaint shape, filled with old crown glass, and perhaps emblazoned shields in the framing of the lead. Casements of similar character may be placed on either side of the ingle-nook.

It will be seen that our drawings represent halls planned with these points in view. The half-landing, in one of them, at a height of about seven feet, overlooks the Hall by means of an open balcony, and from this landing half a dozen steps lead to the level of the bedrooms, which are about three feet and a half lower than the floor of the room over the Hall,—a room adapted for a study, and reached by a short staircase from the upper landing. In carrying out the design, it is intended that the woodwork should be of oak, darkened in tone and finished with a dull wax polish. The spaces between the timbering are to be of plaster, and the tree forms of the frieze in gesso work, while at each end a rich, decorative panel painted on a woven fabric will give the effect of a panel of tapestry. The brickwork is to be exposed (the bricks being of rich tones of red and purple, with a sanded face), yielding pleasant warmth and colour, which will be heightened by the glow of the hammered copper hood and wall-lining of the fireplace. The corridor beyond is to be panelled with an oak dado, filled with rich tapestry above.

The effect, indeed, is to be gained by a generous use of such materials as lend themselves to it by their colour, texture, and

form, and by following the old builders in their practice of exposing the construction, instead of hiding the brick and stone and timber under a neat and proper coat of smooth plaster, clothing both walls and ceiling. Nor will the architect have done his whole duty by this Hall until he has chosen and designed its furniture, which, though on simple lines, must of course harmonise with the general scheme. It will be easier, no doubt, to build a square box with fireplace, windows, and doors, and then to call in the professional "decorator" to paint, paper, and colour it, and the Tottenham Court Road "furnisher" to fill it with catalogue chairs and tables; but, though easier, it will hardly be better—save for Tottenham Court Road.

In all the drawings it will be noticed that we have reverted to the post-and-beam construction, as opposed to the moulded pilaster and arch. Post-and-beam is the primitive and truthful method of construction in wood. The pilaster and arch are suggested by stone construction, and always give one a feeling that the mouldings are stuck on, and do not grow naturally out of the material—in a word, that the Art is "applied." This method also requires the services of very expert craftsmen. It is the cabinet-maker's work rather than the carpenter's, and is extremely costly. Post-and-beam, however, is not only sincere as a style and sound as a method of construction, but is so easy to execute, that the cheap, direct workmanship of the country carpenter achieves it more expressively than all the skill and pains of the town cabinet-maker; for the traditions of a simpler and larger time linger in many a village workshop, and the carpenter, who believes less in glue than in oak pegs, and still puts his trust in the old-fashioned mortise and tenon, will often invest his work with an unpremeditated charm of sound construction and sterling workmanship worth twice the townsman's machine-made smartness and polish.

It is true that designers of country houses during the last few years have frequently revived the timber-and-plaster construction of past ages. But in most cases they have confined the treatment to the outside of the house, and, once inside, their courage has failed them. It would be absurd, of course, to treat every apartment in this manner, and to make a god of mere consistency, but its suitability for the Hall is indisputable. It is

a style that tells its own story of simplicity and dignity and soundness, and it is the enemy of meaningless ornament and fussy effects of mere "applied" decoration.

But these posts and beams of solid oak will naturally impel their owners, in some cases, towards embellishment by means of carving, or gesso treatment, or even the inlaying of natural woods; to which, always provided the work is appropriately and soberly done, there need be no objection. Perhaps, however, it will be better not to carry out such embellishments while the house is a-building. Without being exactly afterthoughts, they should be the fruit of acquaintance, and even of intimacy, with the stones and timber composing the dwelling. There is something depressing in taking up one's abode in a house so minutely finished that nothing is left for brush or tool to do. A house, after all, is more to us than a place to eat and drink and sleep in. It is the temple of the home-spirit, and few occupations can yield more satisfaction than that of making the shrine ever more and more adequate and expressive. With the passing of the years the stones and beams become precious to us as silent witnesses of our most sacred joys and sorrows, and surely their decoration should not be the jarring exotic which the professional decorator will give us, in common with a thousand other clients, according to the mode of the hour. It should rather be a personal thing,—a chronicle of our expanding and varying mental states, a picture-book of tender or stirring reminiscences. As we sit around the hearth-fire on the long winter nights, and weave our memories and fancies and hopes with the flicker and glow of the firelight, some jingling old-world rhyme, some stately line or pleasant conceit of our forefathers, often strikes us as illuminating or summing up our own experience; and how fitting and delightful it will be to write the words, as the Israelites were bidden to do, upon the posts of our houses or on our gates, so that when we sit down in our house, or lie down, or rise up, they may be ever before our eyes. Often, again, some quaint form occurs to us, and so engages our imagination, that at last, like the scent of certain flowers, it always calls up for us the same train of thought; and how pleasant it will be to raise our eyes and find such forms adorning wall or window. To the casual stranger, for whose approval we too often trick out our houses with conventional and

meaningless ornaments, such decorations may lack attraction, but to ourselves, for whom after all the building and adorning are chiefly done, they will not fail to be a treasure-house, all the richer because only we, and those we love well enough to share it with them, possess the key.

In giving practical effect to these observations, we shall generally express ourselves best, as regards carving, by preferring the work of our own ancestors and kindred (such as Old English letters and the rude but spirited and beautiful carving in low relief which one still finds in remote Scandinavian villages) to the characteristic performances of the Italian Renaissance. As for the larger and more striking features, we have already referred to the decoration of the ancient Hall by tapestries representing familiar stories. But though ladies' fingers to-day might be taught to rival their foremothers' fingers in skill, it is too much to hope that they can equal them again in patience; and for this and other reasons, tapestries properly so called will generally be out of the question. There is no reason, however, why we should not treat large surfaces either by means of frescoes, or, as Viollet-le-duc suggested, by means of painted tapestries, or paintings in liquid colours on woven fabrics of similar texture to old tapestry. The colours, having no body, act as a kind of dye, and the texture of the material yields a result tolerably comparable with that of genuine tapestry. Nor is this a dishonest modern substitute. It is a very ancient and honourable art. At Rheims, for instance, one may see examples of it dating from the fifteenth century, and in perfect preservation. This is the kind of decoration we have suggested between the plain oak framings in our first two plates.

The third plate reproduces a work by Mr. F. W. Davis, which, though painted on canvas, is more of the nature of a fresco than of a painted tapestry. It is broadly treated in brilliant colours, and measures about thirteen feet by three, exclusive of a broad frame of oak, as shown in the other plates. This painting is one of a series illustrating *A Dream of John Ball*, and has recently been placed in the Hall of a social enthusiast and admirer of William Morris, who, by giving the artist this commission, has not only made his own domestic surroundings more congenial, but has set an example which must be widely followed if painting is to be lifted out of the ruts in which the predominance of easel-

pictures has embedded it. For the easel-picture finds that assertiveness is a necessity of its existence. Against a hundred gilt-framed competitors on the gallery-wall, it must cry aloud and spare not, or languish unnoticed ; and when the exhibition is over, such a work cannot but be a jarring note in any scheme of domestic decoration to which it may be transferred. If men with the ability and willingness to pay large sums for easel-pictures can be encouraged to offer equal rewards for decorative pictures of equal merit, they will both get more for their money and help to bring back the glories of the time when the Arts dwelt together in unity. Of course it is not in the Hall alone that this opportunity exists.

Our last plate shows a Hall panelled in white wood to within a few feet of the ceiling-line. The joists of the upper storey are exposed, and stained green to match the panelling and door. The frieze is of jute, stained straw-colour, and perhaps enriched with a conventional pattern stencilled in rich autumn tints. The hangings and upholstery are of similar tones of colour. The furniture is rather archaic, soundly made, and such as most furnishing firms are hardly likely to keep in stock. It is of hard wood, stained green, with gesso enrichments, and mountings of pewter with handles of polished steel.

Joseph Crouch and Edmund Butler,

THE THEATRE

I REMEMBER, some years ago, advising a distinguished, though somewhat unfortunate, writer of poetical plays to write a play as little like ordinary plays as possible, that it might be judged with a fresh mind, and to put it on the stage in some little suburban theatre, where a small audience would pay its expenses. I said that he should follow it the year after, at the same time of the year, with another play, and so on from year to year; and that the people who read books, and do not go to the theatre, would gradually find out about him. I suggested that he should begin with a pastoral play, because nobody would expect from a pastoral play the succession of nervous tremours which the plays of commerce, like the novels of commerce, have substituted for the purification that comes with pity and terror to the imagination and intellect. He followed my advice in part, and had a small but perfect success, filling his little theatre for twice the number of performances he had announced; but instead of being content with the praise of his equals, and waiting to win their praise another year, he hired immediately a great London theatre, and put his pastoral play and a new play before a meagre and scoffing audience. I still remember his pastoral play with delight, because, if not always poetry, it was always poetical; but I remember it at the little theatre, where my pleasure was magnified by the pleasure of those about me, and not at the big theatre, where it made me uncomfortable, as an unwelcome guest always makes one uncomfortable.

Why should we thrust our works, which we have written with an imaginative sincerity and filled with spiritual desire, before those quite excellent people who think that Rossetti's women are "guys," that Rodin's women are "ugly," and that Ibsen is "immoral," and who only want to be left at peace to enjoy the

works so many clever men have made especially to suit them? We must make a theatre for ourselves and our friends, and for a few simple people who understand from sheer simplicity what we understand from scholarship and thought. We have planned the Irish Literary Theatre with this hospitable emotion, and, that the right people may find out about us, we hope to act a play or two in the spring of every year; and that the right people may escape the stupefying memory of the theatre of commerce which clings even to them, our plays will be for the most part remote, spiritual, and ideal.

A common opinion is that the poetic drama has come to an end, because modern poets have no dramatic power; and Mr. Binyon, in his article in *The Dome* for March, seems to accept this opinion when he says: "It has been too often assumed that it is the manager who bars the way to poetic plays. But it is much more probable that the poets have failed the managers. If poets mean to serve the stage, their dramas must be dramatic." I find it easier to believe that audiences, who have learned, as I think, from the life of crowded cities to live upon the surface of life, and actors and managers, who study to please them, have changed, than that imagination, which is the voice of what is eternal in man, has changed. The arts are but one Art; and why should all intense painting and all intense poetry have become not merely unintelligible but hateful to the greater number of men and women, and intense drama move them to pleasure? The audiences of Sophocles and of Shakespeare and of Calderon were not unlike the audiences I have heard listening in Irish cabins to songs in Gaelic about "an old poet telling his sins," and about "the five young men who were drowned last year," and about "the lovers that were drowned going to America," or to some tale of Usheen and his three hundred years in *Teer nan Oge*. Mr. Bridges' *Return of Ulysses*, one of the most beautiful and, as I think, dramatic of modern plays, might have some success in the Arran Islands if the Gaelic League would translate it into Gaelic, but I am quite certain that it would have no success in the Strand.

Blake has said that all Art is a labour to bring again the Golden Age, and all culture is certainly a labour to bring again the simplicity of the first ages, with knowledge of good and evil

added to it. The drama has need of cities that it may find men in sufficient numbers, and cities destroy the emotions to which it appeals, and therefore the days of the drama are brief and come but seldom. It has one day when the emotions of cities still remember the emotions of sailors and husbandmen and shepherds and users of the spear and the bow, as the houses and furniture and earthen vessels of cities, before the coming of machinery, remember the rocks and the woods and the hillside; and it has another day, now beginning, when thought and scholarship discover their desire. In the first day, it is the Art of the people; and in the second day, like the dramas acted of old times in the hidden places of temples, it is the preparation of a Priesthood. It may be, though the world is not old enough to show us any example, that this Priesthood will spread their Religion everywhere, and make their Art the Art of the people. When the first day of the drama had passed by, actors found that an always larger number of people were more easily moved through the eyes than through the ears.

The emotion that comes with the music of words is exhausting, like all intellectual emotions, and few people like exhausting emotions; and therefore actors began to speak as if they were reading something out of the newspapers. They forgot the noble art of oratory, and gave all their thought to the poor art of acting, that is content with the sympathy of our nerves; until at last those who love poetry found it better to read alone in their rooms what they had once delighted to hear sitting friend by friend, lover by beloved. I once asked Mr. William Morris if he had thought of writing a play, and he answered that he had, but would not write one, because actors did not know how to speak poetry with the half chant men spoke it with in old times. Mr. Swinburne's *Locrine* was acted a few days ago, and it was not badly acted, but nobody could tell whether it was fit for the stage or not, for not one rhythm, not one cry of passion, was spoken with a musical emphasis, and verse spoken without a musical emphasis seems but an artificial and cumbersome way of saying what might be said naturally and simply in prose.

As audiences and actors changed, managers learned to substitute meretricious landscapes, painted upon canvas and upon cardboard, for the descriptions of poetry, until the painted

scenery, which had in Greece been a charming explanation of what was least important in the story, became as important as the story. It needed some imagination, some gift for day-dreams, to see the horses and the fields and flowers of Colonus as one listened to the elders gathered about Œdipus, or to see "the pendent bed and procreant cradle" of the "martlet" as one listened to Duncan before the castle of Macbeth; but it needs no imagination to admire a painting of one of the more obvious effects of nature painted by somebody who understands how to show everything to the most hurried glance. At the same time the managers made the costumes of the actors more and more magnificent, that the mind might sleep in peace, while the eye took pleasure in the magnificence of velvet and silk and in the physical beauty of women. These changes gradually perfected the theatre of commerce, the masterpiece of that movement towards externality in life and thought and Art, against which the criticism of our day is learning to protest.

Even if poetry were spoken as poetry, it would still seem out of place in many of its highest moments upon a stage, where the superficial appearances of nature are so closely copied; for poetry is founded upon convention, and becomes incredible the moment painting or gesture remind us that people do not speak verse when they meet upon the highway. The theatre of Art, when it comes to exist, must therefore discover grave and decorative gestures, such as delighted Rossetti and Madox Brown, and grave and decorative scenery, that will be forgotten the moment an actor has said "It is dawn" or "It is raining" or "The wind is shaking the trees"; and dresses of so little irrelevant magnificence that the mortal actors and actresses may change without much labour into the immortal people of romance. The theatre began in ritual, and it cannot come to its greatness again without recalling words to their ancient sovereignty.

It will take a generation, and perhaps generations, to restore the theatre of Art; for one must get one's actors, and perhaps one's scenery, from the theatre of commerce until new actors and new painters have come to help one; and until many failures and imperfect successors have made a new tradition, and perfected in detail the ideal that is beginning to float before our eyes. If one could call one's painters and one's actors from where one would,

how easy it would be. I know some painters, who have never painted scenery, who could paint the scenery I want, but they have their own work to do ; and in Ireland I have heard a red-haired orator repeat some bad political verses with a voice that went through one like flame, and made them seem the most beautiful verses in the world ; but he knows nothing of the stage, and probably despises it.

W. B. Yeats.

GRIEG

A Study in Silver

I ALWAYS associate Grieg with Winter. As Chopin is Summer and Tschaikowski Autumn, so Grieg is Winter sharpening painfully into Spring, tingling into vitality. For there is a little poignant edge of waking life on his music, which parallels exquisitely the trees' first futile attempts to put forth green buds for the amusement of the frost—that false dawn of Spring which comes about the beginning of March or even the very end of February. Those buds foredoomed to frost-bite, Grieg has very daintily set to music; not too realistically, of course, for there is hardly a taint of Reality in his music. But then there is no Reality about early Spring, which, critically considered, is merely an elaborately poor joke.

Moreover, Grieg's music holds that swift, sweet pang which thrills through the critic's jaded heart with the first Spring wind on the chord of the ninth—Grieg's characteristic chord. You will find this peculiar sentiment in the little tone poem called *Letzter Frühling*, and also in the *Ballade*. You will feel in it a note of regret, a something which echoes back to an indefinable and indefinite past or lost beauty, and this illusive sense of Echo haunts all Grieg's music, grave and gay: an echo of piercing sweetness, faint and far away, which his fine ear catches in some miraculous way and imprisons between narrow bars.

There is a morning freshness and keenness about Grieg, too romantically rarefied to be breezy; though at times he can be gallantly spirited, as in the March from *Sigurd Jorsalfar*, with its brilliant orchestration, or, in a slighter merrier degree, the adorable *Sonata in F* for piano and violin, which has the gracious swing of an Arab horse.

Grieg is habitually and resolutely merry when he is not, and

sometimes when he is, sad : his music is a mosaic of easy epigram, neat, witty, and pathetic, always crisp and sparkling ; his notes have the biting freshness of ice and snow, and the glitter of hoar-frost. Silver is his informing colour : the whiteness of his tone colour has none of the softness of ivory, not a gleam of moonlight ; it is winter by daylight, dazzling silver. You may have observed that Grieg's music is always strenuous with northern energy ; it lacks the gracious languor of Slavonic temper. It is all glitter and effect, and seemingly somewhat artificial in its continuous piquancy ; but I think that artifice comes naturally to Grieg, and certainly it is part of his peculiar, inhuman charm. His little tone lyrics are miracles of natural artifice. The impassioned affectation of them nearly breaks the critic's heart ; they are delicately wrought as hoar-frost tracery on window-panes, and a single breath of warm Reality would destroy them at once. They are all dedicated to the Lyric Love, all "a wonder and a wild desire."

They are not uniformly good, of course. Like most artists, Grieg is undulating in merit : his passion is sometimes poignant, sometimes mechanical ; his echo is sometimes spiritual, sometimes spiritualistic ; and, now and then, his epigram lacks point. Be lenient with him, for he has achieved the impossible task—he can achieve the Impossible only—of combining femininity and inhumanity. His result is—Pierrette with a soul. Grieg is indeed the Pierrette of Music, charmingly dressed too ! in silver, with touches of the swallow's blue-black ; she has pale gold hair with a natural ripple just *effleuré* by the tongs of Art. To me, Grieg's dainty little pieces always suggest a witty woman : they are so delicately effeminate and fervent withal ; so playful and inconsequent ; so much something to be not quite sure of. This music is very seductive in its gracious femininity ; and where the Feline joins the Feminine—an easy meeting—it is sympathetically like some purring Persian pussy cat who dreams and blinks luxuriously on your knee in armed content, swift to scratch ! For that indefinable vein of asceticism running through Grieg's erotic mazes we find also in our capricious cat, who checks too fervent advances with a malicious claw, which is inexpressibly piquant and alluring when it doesn't go too deep, and it rarely does that. Grieg is quite kittenish in his lightest moods. Some of his little dances, in their fussy, petulant grace and their pathos, symbolise the

kitten turning ever on its self-centred little axis, whirling rhythmically in vain pursuit of its own tail.

When Grieg deserts femininity for inhumanity, as he does when he is more serious (dainty fool!), one finds in him the wild imaginings born of the white North and the impossibility of going much out of doors—that fireside-woven romance which is all legend and fairy-tale with hardly a taint of Possibility: such tales of elves and fays and gnomes! such marvellous tone-impressions of the winter landscape! Play *Einsamer Wanderer*, and you will feel the bitter-sweetness of solitude amid the glittering, glimmering snow-fields. Listen to that weird song *Henrik Vergeland*, and you will hear the lament of the wind in the pines.

This thoroughly wintry spirit one finds mostly in the instrumental music; the songs are often almost tropical, with here and there just a hint of a pretty artificial, altogether charming midsummer madness. For instance, *Erotik*, which is somehow a piano-piece, and *Ich liebe dich* are languorous with summer: you can feel the scented darkness in them, and the warmth and the wildness. But Grieg's summer music is not quite characteristic of his peculiar, charming, and immutable personality: Winter is his atmosphere, that one can see clearly in half a hundred impressionist tone-pictures. His music has great pictorial or literary merit; it is most readable, and its illusions are quite lucid; it could be transcribed into pictures if not into words. Look at the irresolute, graceful flutterings of *Schmetterling* (wrongly named), which paint the Moth to the life, and to the death beyond on the very lowest note of all. Watch the Troll-dance in *Peer Gynt*: you can actually see the ugly little fiends teasing the wretched Peer. Look at "Morning" in the same suite: you see the dawn break on a prismatic chord, a miracle of the musical *not juste*. Oh, Grieg's talent for musical epigram and impressionist sketching is undeniable; and though he is rather lightly held by seriously obtuse musicians, he has, coupled with that deified-amateur charm which they deplore, a unique sentiment of his own, a something personal, connected with the false dawn and the doubtful Spring, with the lyric love and the Echo.

Israfel.

FOUR PLATES ILLUSTRATING
"GIOVANNI SEGANTINI"

1. AVE MARIA.
2. AT THE BAR.
3. MOONLIGHT STUDY.
4. STUDY.









GIOVANNI SEGANTINI

At the meeting of Italy and German-Switzerland there is a region, six thousand feet above the sea, where the vales are still unaffrighted by screeching locomotives, the lakes still unchurned by steamboats, and fleecy clouds, unmingled with the smoke of factories, still float between the pastures and the sky. There one may see haymakers and harvesters draped like statues in blue and red, and among them a man, strongly built, with long curly black hair and beard, and dark eyes, looking like a nomad chief of the Bible.

I am speaking of the Engadine, and of Giovanni Segantini, who, by reason of hard work and great talent, has both deserved and obtained the first place among modern Italian painters.

Even Lanzi, that charming story-teller, could hardly relate more romantic details of an old master's career than are to be found in the life of Segantini. It is recorded, for instance, that his work as an artist began in compassion for a peasant-mother crying bitterly over the body of her little daughter. "Ah, if I had only a picture of her!" Constrained by pity, Segantini seized a pencil, and, in the mysterious presence of death, essayed his first portrait.

Segantini's childhood was passed on a farm. His work was the herding of swine, whose clumsy bodies he studied and drew, just as Cimabue began by drawing sheep. Indeed, the comparison with Cimabue is doubly significant in the case of Segantini, who has so vigorously forwarded the work of freeing modern Italian Art from the mannerisms of the schools. The painter's father, a townsman, seems to have been miserably poor. At any rate, it is known that he left his boy with a half-sister at Milan, and quitted Italy, probably for America and the Golden Fleece, and whether he found fortune or not, he never returned.

Upon the lad's miserable life in a garret, from which he could see only one little turquoise patch of the Italian sky, I shall not dwell, nor upon his resolve to cross the Alps into France in search of fortune, nor his start and failure, nor his years spent with peasants who picked him up on the road and gave him shelter. It is enough to say that the determination to pursue Art steadily grew, and that at length he went back to Milan for the purpose. I do not know exactly how old he was on his return to Milan, nor is the point of great importance.

The youth entered Brera Academy as a student of ornament. During the day he worked for a living, and during the evening he studied Art. How he managed to exist I cannot tell, as it is a fact that his poverty was so acute as to prevent his purchasing even a box of colours. Indeed, not until the last month of his second year as a student, did he experience the joy of possessing one. It was the gift of Bernacchi, one of the professors, who noticed the young man's marked inclination for colour and his originality in the interpretation of form. Segantini's box of water-colours gave him so much delight, that he made up his mind to become a painter rather than a mere draughtsman; and, in order to carry out this new plan, he somehow obtained a place as a teacher of decoration at the Patronati. He was employed three hours a week, and was paid three *lire*. On three *lire* he lived, and attended the school of figure-drawing and perspective. But this did not last long. Even in his studies he already showed the hand of an innovator, and the professors, who were all more or less imbued with academic mannerism, began to look at him so suspiciously, and to treat him so much as a rebel, that their pupil was obliged to leave the school and to go to Nature for further lessons.

He was not now, however, quite without friends. A grocer—a thousand pities that we do not know his name!—bought for the young artist his first oil-colours. But as he did not also buy him a canvas, the painter was obliged to prepare one for himself, which he did by saturating the canvas of a sugar-bag with oil, and stretching it on a frame. It was on this that he executed his first picture in oils, *The Choir of the Church of San Antonio*.

It is said, too, that while at Brera he used to work in the studio of a painter of church banners, who once, in a swell of

artistic pride, asked his pupil what he would do if he were as great an artist as his master.

"Hang myself!" said Segantini. It was like Tintoret defying his master, save that while Segantini may recall anecdotes of Jacopo Robusti, the worthy banner-painter can scarcely play up to him as Titian.

His first oil-painting was exhibited at Brera and attracted much attention. This was *The Choir of the Church of San Antonio* already mentioned, and there is a legend about it not unlike Vasari's story of the secret of the shining oil-colours, which Giovanni Bellini obtained from a painter who first brought them to Venice. Giovanni Segantini is said to have failed at first in trying to render certain effects of light pouring through a window, and to have discovered at last a new way of using the colours, and obtaining from them greater luminous and atmospheric effects, by laying one colour beside another, instead of mixing them as he had been taught. How much truth there may be in this I do not know. I never remember hearing Segantini mention it, and there is nothing about it in the autobiography published in *Il Focolari*. Of course there was already a great deal of talk about division of colours; but despite what his critics have said, Segantini, at any rate, does not mean painting with small dots or lines. "God save us!" he wrote to a friend, "I do not know anything to which I feel a greater repugnance than so-called scientific systems materially applied to Art. Art should certainly not repudiate the discoveries of Science, but it should, by their means, find their secret in nature, and translate them through nature into a picture. Otherwise it will not be an achievement of Art: it will remain always only an achievement of Science."

In his first studio in the Via San Marco, Segantini painted a number of pictures during 1880-81, but many of them he destroyed, in the conviction that they were too far below his aspirations. He was beginning to have clearer ideas of what he wished to do; so he left Milan, rented a house at Brianza, and again took up his abode in the country, this time with a wife, the sister of his painter-friend Carlo Bugatti. To this period belongs the beautiful work *Ave Maria* here reproduced. It is the first of a series which Segantini calls simply *Mothers*.

Segantini sojourned in Priziano eighteen months, and then

left for Carlo Cattaneo's old villa at Castagnola, near Luzono. But with the waning of spring he found that the landscape did not realise his expectations. There was too much cultivated land, too much green, too many houses, and, above all, too many trifles. So he filled a waggon with his belongings, and scoured the country for two whole days in search of a suitable place. Carella was chosen at last; and there he dwelt for two years, painting such works as *A Thunderstorm on a Mountain*, *The Mothers*, *The Empty Cradle*, and *The Last Work of the Day*.

To the International Exhibition in Amsterdam in 1886, he sent the last of the pictures which he painted in Switzerland—the large canvas called *At the Bar*. To this work the gold medal was awarded; and when it was shown at Bologna, the Italian Government bought it for twenty thousand *lire*. This was the turning of the tide. But fame and gold were chiefly acceptable to Segantini because they enabled him to realise his long-cherished plan of settling in the Alps, amidst great mountains, and large, solitary pastures, peopled only by a few shepherds and herdsmen with their cattle and sheep. The Engadine at Majola was the land of his dreams, and there, as he himself puts it, he “learned to look more audaciously into the sun, to love its radiation, to study nature in its most intense and most luminous colouring, and in its most animated life.”

Thus isolated, he gives himself up entirely to his art, and works as his own heart and mind constrain him. He lives among peasants, mingling his life with theirs. They are not occasional models seen during the brief months of a summer holiday. His heart beats in unison with theirs. He paints themselves and their sheep and dogs and cattle in the truth and poetry of their humble existence, and in the unconscious grace of their familiar attitudes. He paints their fields and huts surrounded by white horizons of eternal snow, and the sky that blesses them with sun and rain and curses them with gloom and tempest. During the spring and summer and part of the autumn, he works constantly out of doors at three or four pictures, going from one to another according to nature's moods and his own. Winter is his holiday, spent quietly with wife and children in reading and the simplest pleasures.

So much for Segantini's life. As for his Art, one of the first things to be pointed out is his detestation of all that savours of

the theatrical or sentimental "picturesque." In him there is nothing forced, "nothing petty : only the reality of nature and of humble life expressed with broad and communicative sympathy. Segantini is a softened realist whose first years of hardship and solitude have preserved him from disillusion, and who knows how to maintain in his soul, by the way of life he has adopted, the purity of his ideal."

He paints idyllic and pastoral life. Maternity he loves especially to exalt, because, as he has written to me, "the pleasure of life is in knowing how to love. At the bottom of every good work is love. Love is the source of beauty." He has, therefore, executed a whole series of pictures with maternity for their common theme—happy mothers, bad mothers, unfortunate mothers. For his representation of the punishment of bad mothers he has turned to a Buddhist legend, according to which bad mothers are compelled to wander wildly all the long winter night through a land of ice, where they are grappled by twisted trees which rise up out of the snow to catch them. Many readers of *The Dome* have seen this picture, as it was shown last year at Knightsbridge ; and they will remember the women with babes at their breasts and gowns blown about by the furious wind. *Mothers*, however, is the only work in which Segantini appears as a story-teller, and even in this case the actual painting, which is the principal thing, is good painting. From a painter's point of view, the essence of a picture is the use of certain colours, a certain distribution of spots, a certain relation of shapes, colours, and light. The painter's task is to transfer a picture reflected on his brain to canvas, and to effect the transformation of real space, of natural relations of colours, lights, and shapes, into fictitious spaces, lights, and shapes, which by the painter's skill shall give an appearance of nature. The great majority of Segantini's paintings represent nature from the standpoint of a man who observes a phenomenon but is himself outside it, neither experiencing emotion himself nor trying to arouse it in others. In all his best and most characteristic work the aim is purely pictorial.

Man is in his canvases, but always as one of the many forms of life, and animals are included in the same spirit. Whatever forms Segantini introduces, he exploits in all their peculiarities ; but even when such forms are human beings, there is no question for this

artist of psychological or sentimental motives, or of good or evil relations between people. Indeed, the mere size of the figures in proportion to the whole seems to show how far he is from desiring to express their sentiments or psychological states. In his finest performances, such as *The Alpine Pasture*, *At the Close of the Day*, *Ploughing*, *Watering*, *The Return from the Woods*, and *At the Bar*, he seeks only to represent normal, everyday life—the life, one might say, of ants at work or at rest, upon which he looks from a distance as a man looks down at an ant-hill. For him, as a painter, the world is a gathering of glossy spots and lights and shapes.

It must not be inferred from this that Segantini is incapable of understanding and expressing the other side of life. It is not so. Indeed, such pictures as *Sorrow finding Comfort in Faith*, *The Angel at the Springs of Life*, and *Music and Inspiration*, vindicate him from the charge of onesidedness, though they do not weaken the general statement I have tried to make,—that he does not, in his pictures, disclose his own soul, or confess his personal sorrows. That which he suffers or enjoys as a man does not influence his work as a painter. For life to the painter is not only the movement of animals and men: it is also the sunshine, bathing the wide plains, breaking in large spots on the walls of houses, trembling on the waves of a lake or river, edging the clouds in summer. Life is the dusk of evening falling on the empty fields in autumn, or lying among the houses of a village. Life is the ceaseless, restless play of colour and light, the endless shaking of the balance of light; and it is with this life that Segantini's pictures are instinct. The objects composing them are painted with extraordinary richness of colour, and not less extraordinary variety of combinations of colour, along with such a feeling for the most subtle shades and reflections that the surface of the canvas seems to retreat to the background, if not to disappear, so that the air circulates round all the painted objects, shining and vibrating with light. He shows himself deeply sensitive to all the contrasts of light and dark tones, and all the interaction and counteraction of colours. His work is full of the subtle shades which originate in the contact of dark and clear objects: the twilight strongly edging masses bathed in air, and the richness of light and colour varying everywhere through

contrast, yet held together by a large unifying harmony. This painter is so truly a painter that he models everything with colour.

For him, therefore, there can be no stable convention. He reproduces nature as he knows her more and more deeply. He does not express his emotions or his views on the great questions of life, or aim at awakening certain sentiments in the beholder, or preach ideas. He simply represents certain phenomena from the visual side; and, looking at his pictures, we can think about anything we please, as if we are in the presence of reality itself. Our thoughts, indeed, are indifferent to him.

Segantini, in a word, strives to change the surface bordered by a frame into living nature, as undeniable as the most certain phenomena, and with human life in all its accidentality against that background.

S. C. De Soissons.

DEAD-MAN'S EASTER

THIS is the grave which year by year
Gives up its ghostly dead :
Of all poor graves least rest is here,
Where Love laid down his head !

The heart's desire of heart-sick lands
How shall men leave alone ?
Therefore they come with pious hands
And roll away the stone.

So year by year, as dawn brings gloom
To light, and earth waits dumb,
Uneasy from the open tomb
The ghostly Easters come.

Laurence Housman.

AUTUMN MOONRISE

LAMP that risest lone
From thy secret place,
Like a sleeper's face
Charged with thoughts unknown ;

Strange thoughts, unexpressed
In thy brightening beam,
Strangeness more than dream
Upon earth e'er guessed.

Strange thou gleam'st as some
Eastern marble old,
Scrawled with runes that hold
Histories, yet are dumb.

But thy viewless hand
Out of whelming night
Waves the trees to light,
Summons up the land.

Sea that merged in sky
To its far bound shines ;
And thy touch defines
Our Infinity.

Now the murmuring coast
Glistens ; rocks are there ;
And what most was bare
Thou enrichest most.

THE DOME

Far through granite caves
Diving glide thy beams,
Till the dark roof gleams
Laced with hovering waves ;

O'er the white walls glide,
Through the lattice creep,
Where the lovers sleep,
Bridegroom by his bride.

Soft their wakened eyes
From a deep bliss gaze
On those marvellous rays
New from Paradise.

And the self-same hour,
Whitening Russian plains,
On sad exile trains
Thou dost shed thy power.

For no more the gloom
Makes their kind disguise ;
Bare to hating eyes
Is revealed their doom.

Bowed, they see their own
Shadows on the snow,
And the way they go,
Endlessly alone :

Aching, chained, footsore,
Through the waste they wind,
All their joy behind,
All their grief before.

O thou sleeper's face,
Whence hast thou this might,
So much to delight,
And so much to abase ?

Thou, to lovers bliss,
Exiles' deepened pain,
On all shores dost rain
Kiss on radaint kiss!

Changed in thy control,
Though no leaf hath stirred,
Though no breath was heard,
Lie both world and soul.

Laurence Binyon.

A MUSICAL MINIATURE

Messaline

FROM Marseilles to Monte Carlo : surely there are few more exquisite visions in this Europe of ours, as the train dodges the sea, and the sea dodges the train. Now, when the level upon which you are racing is suddenly heightened, the line of the horizon upon the water sweeps down almost to your very eyes, and, even while you puzzle over it, away back the spaces seem to roll over the infinite vastness of the sea. Then you catch the blue through the branches of the pale eucalyptus ; or the cypress stands here like a slim sentinel grave and motionless against the brilliant sky, or there like a flame of brilliant black against the pallid, dusty colour of the mountain side. And the waters suffer their sea-changes of everlasting variety . . . As I made my way up the hill, past the Casino, it was possible to remember the chief reason of my journey. It was not to speculate upon the colour of the sea, upon aloes clutching the rims of yellow old Italian walls, upon grim and spare hills, or upon what a friend has wittily called Noah's Ark cypresses : I am here for *Messaline*, Isidore de Lara's new opera. In this shining and virginal surrounding I had not found it at first easy to remember Messalina ; but I quickly discovered, when the atmosphere of Monte Carlo had gently descended upon my spirit, that the subject of the new work was not wildly inappropriate, not surprisingly jarring, not altogether discordant with its present environment. On the contrary, the air, the tone, the general sentiment of the town and of the Casino, rather tuned the mind to the true pitch, fashioned, in fact, a not unfit preparation for the right appreciation and apprehension of *Messaline* . . . Evening was descending upon the wonderful hills, the unparalleled sea ; the soft light was

deepening to darkness ; with a hesitating and wondering mind, I entered the Casino theatre to hear for the first time *Messaline : tragédie lyrique*, music by Isidore de Lara, book by Armand Silvestre and Eugène Morand. The lights in the theatre were extinguished. All was ready.

A long lazy phrase for the violins, undulating slowly, changing peacefully, and gradually gathering other instruments of the orchestra in its support, struck at the outset a surprisingly sincere note. An atmosphere was created. On couches of flowers, heaped carelessly too, like flowers, the women of Messalina lie and sing gently as they await the waking of the Empress ; among them Tyndaris sings of Ionian chants and golden lyres, and again together they all sing of birds, of leafy trees and of roses, until the word is softly passed that the sleep of Messalina is finished. The senators of Rome join the scene to greet the Empress, and among them Myrrhon, a gay patrician, sings with quick vitality of the mere joy of life. The music grows and accumulates—always with original feeling, always with extraordinary rightness of dramatic sentiment ; the distant gates crowning a marble stairway are thrown open ; a train of children flinging flowers, a train of attendant women—these pass ; and then, upon the climax of a great chord, Messalina herself, saluting her court. You try to catch her in the swiftly flying music, as she speaks. It gives you her strength, contempt, pride ; the certainty of it is unerring. Then you hear the murmur of a great crowd, crying out against her tyranny and her lusts. She sends for the singer who has kindled popular passion against her, and who is even now at the head of the mob without. He is brought. “Sing to me,” says Messalina scornfully. Then he bursts into a song of mockery, and hatred, and all that is darkest in implacable resentment and savage opposition. It is a big musical achievement, this song, and it has its destiny in the drama that follows. Messalina and Harès the singer are left alone ; and, “What have I done that you should hate me ?” asks she, with a veiled tenderness—“I who only desire to love, I who seek for love that always escapes me.” Then she begins to expound her own enormous desire, her insatiable yearning. Softly at first the music glides like tender winds through a velvet air ; and it is always true in dramatic feeling : note that, always true in dramatic feeling. Then the

thing grows in volume and intensity, and you feel how the woman is drawing Harès "as the snake is drawn from the hole." "Who are you?" he gasps. "Do you still hate me?" she asks, and you hear in the mysterious orchestra the song of mockery and hate breaking and growing helpless, as he comes nearer to her and nearer. "Are you Astarte, Tanit, Messalina, or Venus?" he questions her. "Neither one nor another: I am she who loves you." Messalina has conquered. The tragedy of Harès has begun.

I find my miniature of the second act less composed, less perfect in unity. It is rather in six cameos, each leaning on the other, with a general atmosphere created by tavern roysterers and gay livers of life, and throughout the sinister stealing figure of Messalina, insatiable, and faint with desire. First the music brings Harès from the darkness, his heart passionate with love, with anxiety, with dread, and with an enormous longing that is too broad for his narrow heart. "O nuit d'amour," he sings in a large and exquisite phrase, "repands-toi comme une onde," and the song seems to prophesy vague things of pain and unidentified suffering: so he passes... Then Messalina unveils herself in an apostrophe to Venus which shows both her power, her passion, and the inscrutability of herself to herself. This too is greatly dramatic... Myrrhon and his laughing girls flit across the vision, singing exquisitely of the passing moment... Then with a clang of arms and vehement intensity of expression Hélión the gladiator leaps on the stage; and from the darkness, while the crowd shouts with joy over his savage delight in sheer fighting, Messalina watches, watches... Hélión and Harès meet: they are brothers... Messalina is creeping after Hélión, when, on a sudden, hustled by the crowd, she finds in him a rescuer, and with him escapes from the tavern, recognised as she goes by Harès... All this, too, is dramatically written; but it lacks unity, as I have said.

From this point onwards the threads draw together; the thing coheres into a marvellously inevitable picture. Slumberous and sensuous musical phrases rise like incense upon the quiet air, phrases that swell and subside, advance and recede with the rhythmic movement of a sinuous and stately dance. In a softly illuminated chamber, into which the intense moonlight shines, near an open casement above the Tiber, women recline upon soft cushions,

crooning a wonderful lullaby. They rise, and to the phrases of their song they slowly move from the room. The music tightens. Messalina and Hélión are here, he faintly struggling against her influence, she bending towards him, willowy and tense, sinning with all her whole soul's will. Afar is heard the murmurous music of the singing-women, purposely mindless, but faint with the full emotion of some Mohammedan paradise. "These songs, these perfumes are for you," she murmurs to Hélión. There is a flash. The music burns like silver. "You love me?" she asks. From outside comes the cry of Harès—"Hélión!" The mysterious song of mockery creeps into the orchestra, as Hélión momentarily remembers his brother. But Messalina is instant. "Yes," he cries, "I love you," and the music blazes like a fire, barbarous, tropical, furious. But Harès is at the door. Hélión must hide; and with an amazing contrast of majesty the Empress greets the troubadour. Her slaves are there. He is bound and flung into the Tiber. Once more the music surges up in flame as Hélión returns to the arms of Messalina... It is moonlight, it is starlight on the river; and the brilliant window of Messalina's chamber alone shines with a golden and an alien light on the remote bank. Chill, and quivering with a hate cruel as death, Harès, rescued, is brought from the waters. "Tomorrow, Messalina shall die," he cries, as he speeds into the night. Away, far away, the soft voices of the singing-women are heard, and distant calls echo upon the air. As the scene closes, you feel the terror of its menacing and foreboding peacefulness.

Messalina, regally robed, is now seated in the Imperial room that looks upon the arena of the Circus. She has been warned of the chance of assassination. Hélión, unknowing his mistress's name, has learned who has encompassed the ruin of his brother. He storms to the presence of the Empress, and Messalina shrouds her face from him. You understand here that the musician has touched a heroic moment. There is a feeling of grandeur and of breadth in these great phrases. "Strike then," Messalina cries, revealing her face. "You, you," gasps Hélión. "I cannot." "Then welcome the assassin," she retorts, and flings the doors wide open. Harès rushes in to slay, but Hélión, blind and unaware, intercepts him and wounds him mortally. In solemn, long, infinitely tragic phrase the dying brother reproaches Hélión.

Again the music changes to wonderful pathos as the death-thought wanders "*au pays bleu des rêves d'or*," and as the singer's spirit sinks in the darkness. Blatantly now does Hélión's passion rage along the whirling music, while underneath there creeps up a motive grim and dark as fate and death. "Be accursed for ever," he cries, flinging himself to the lions, and leaving the dead man's hands clutched to the Imperial robe. "*Sur moi ces mains de mort... J'ai peur*"... And down to the gloom of night the last big bars of this noble music roll.

... It was cool outside, and all nature was very calm. I could not rest, or think of rest. The air was soothing and comfortable. Gradually the tumult, the hustlings of memory, the confusion of the tragedy, died away... And now the sun was floating upwards from the lip of the sea-horizon, flinging abroad on the dawn the red robe of Messalina.

Vernon Blackburn.

The Third Scene of the Second Act of

MESSALINE

(By arrangement with Mr. ISIDORE DE LARA, the Composer of the Music, and Messrs. CHOUDENS, 30 Boulevard des Capucines, Paris, the Publishers of the score.)

Adagio (HARÈS entre lentement)

très expressif

Pressez

HARÈS (avec une douleur profonde)

HARÈS.

Pressez très peu

a Tempo

HARÈS.

Harp.

- sé!... El - le m'a - vait pris, El - le m'a - lais -
avec la voix

Pressez

Harp.

- sé! *violento* **Pressez**

Très lent (Battre eu 4)

Harp.

Très lent (Battre eu 4) La nuit de mon cœur n'au - ra pas d'é - toi - les...

p

Harp.

Les as - tres vont naître... ô ciel, qui te

pp

Ped

Harp. *vo - les Pour fleu -rir d'argent l'a-zur de tes*

Harp. *vo - les. Les mon - des in - con - nus, Sur no - tre front po -*

Allargando
Harp. *- sés, Vont, dans l'ombre a-mou - reu - se, échanger des bai.*

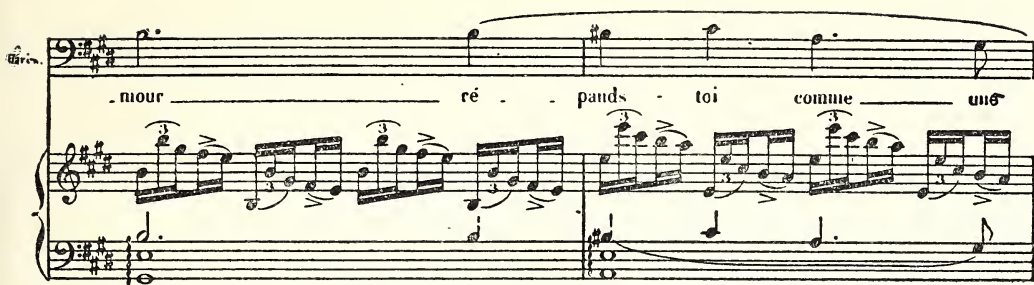
Harp. *- sers! 0 nuit d'a -*

Très large

M.G. pp

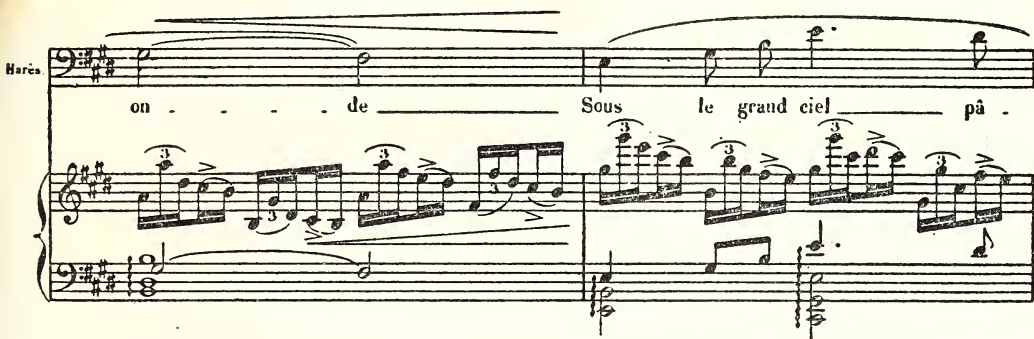
Harmonium

...mour ré - pands - toi comme un



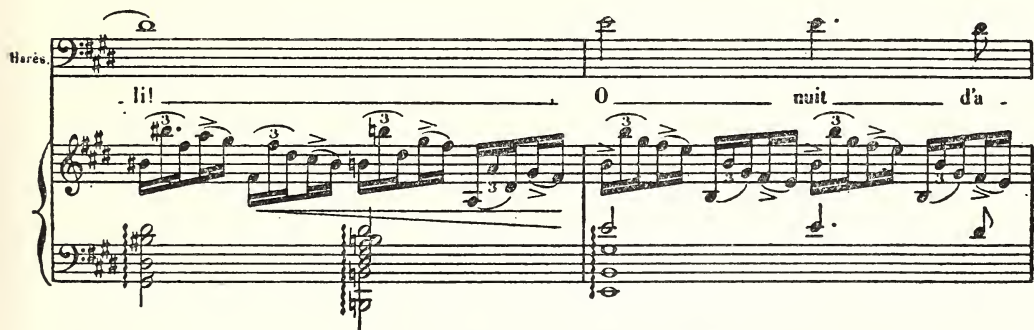
Harmonium

on de Sous le grand ciel pa -



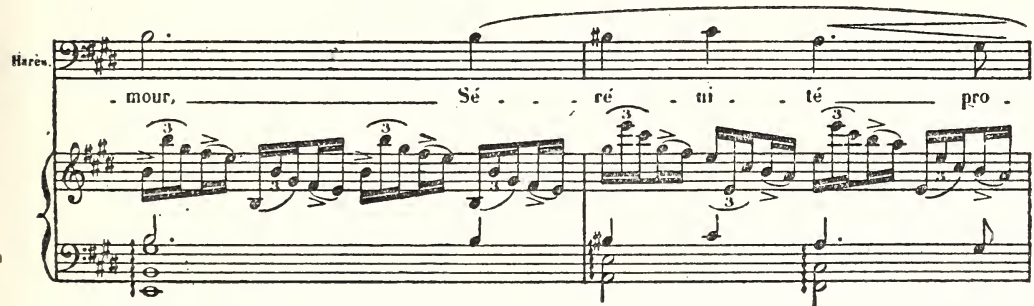
Harmonium

li! O nuit d'a -



Harmonium

...mour, Sé - ré - ni - té pro -



THE DOME

Harmonium

fon de. Verse en mon cœur te

espressivo M.G.

Harmonium

calme et l'ou bli

toujours ppp

Ped

Harmonium se dirige lentement vers le fond et sort.

alleg

Ped

UNDER THE DOME

WITH the present number, *The Dome* begins both the third year of its existence and the third volume of its New Series. It will be seen that a larger space than usual is allotted this month to Music; and, in spite of the forthcoming publication from *The Dome* offices of *The Chord; a Quarterly devoted to Music*, it is intended to give more rather than less attention to the subject in future numbers of *The Dome*. Mr. Edward Elgar, for example, has promised a new composition, and Mr. John F. Runciman has written a careful study of Schumann for an early number.

But even if *The Dome* publishes more important examples and criticisms of Music than ever before, and even if *The Chord* reinforces it mightily, Music will still be far from enjoying her rightful honours in periodical literature. There is a host of musical journals already, it is true; but, almost without exception, they are frankly commercial or professional circulars. There are also a few daily and weekly papers, and here and there a monthly review, in which men who know their subject regularly write about Music as soundly and brilliantly as the best critics of Literature and Painting write about books and pictures, and probably much better than our favourite publicists write about questions of domestic and foreign policy. But, speaking generally, anybody who has written a drawing-room ballad and can chatter of consecutive fifths, is held good

enough to express his own and to guide the people's judgment in respect of musical works and their interpretation. Indeed, to have very little knowledge of music, still less of everything else, and absolutely none of the common rules of grammar, would seem, in some quarters, to be the principal qualifications.

These remarks would not have been made, or they would at least have been made differently, had not a case in point come under our notice at the moment of going to press. On 9th April appeared the much-talked-about first number of *The Sunday Daily Mail*. Its leading article called attention to "the admitted fact that the journalistic level of some among the Sunday papers of to-day is below that of the average week-day journal," and added, "We do not intend that that fault shall be laid to our charge." It may be granted that, though a certain commonness runs through the whole, an interesting attempt has been made to get the paper written by men who either know their business or are supposed to know it (which is the same thing in a popular journal), so that Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, Mr. H. W. Wilson, Mr. G. W. Steevens, Prince Ranjitsinhji, and half a dozen other well-known writers, including a Dean, are all found rewarding the Sabbath-breaking reader together. But when one turns from Cricket, and the Soudan, and the Navy to Music— Let *The Sunday Daily Mail* speak. The article is headed "Priest Composer," and

is of course about Perosi, "the social king of the coming season of crotchets and quavers." Here it is:—

"Italy with its non-subsidised opera houses and absence of means of production for young composers, comes up smiling every two or three years with a composer who is dubbed 'Young Italy,' and who generally makes a whole universe hum with his fame. Mascagni has followed on, via Leoncavallo, Puccini, and Giordano, to Lorenzo Perosi, an abbe of the Roman faith who is maestro di capella at the Basilica of St. Mark in Venice. His father was also in the same post at the time of Lorenzo's birth, an event which marked for its own December 20, 1872. He seems to have had the early musical precocity of Mozart, but owing to his ecclesiastical surroundings and calling he attached his study-interest to the Hayden, Handel, Vittoria, and Palestrina school, whose academic, ponderous grandeur will be found to pervade the three great works we shall be called upon in a week or two to seriously criticise. . . ."

The writer goes on to give a few particulars of the great works, and adds that

"from a general perusal of the score (through the kindness of Messrs. Ricordi), one can arrive at a quick analysis of the style employed. . . ."

It is the Church style, of course, and

"Contrapuntal extravagance in all the ecclesiastical modes follow the various developments, and the largeness of the subject awes one almost by the seeming depth of the writing, as against, say, the melodic resource of another great Church writer—Gounod.

"There is nothing of the light-hearted, frivolous Southerner about Perosi. He has an affectation for long preludes as an indication of his ideas when the limited exigencies of Scriptural libretto fail him. . . . As was to have been expected, the 'Resurrection' shows somewhat of a lighter touch than the other parts of

the cycle, and the 'Hallelujah' at the conclusion can have little else than a grandiose effect conveyed in but a poor way by the condensed vocal score.

"Perosi's vocal score, however, follows the old French plan. Here and there we find short-handed notations of the sort of orchestration which is now and then dealt out to the development of the scheme. But, although one with an experience of these sort of analyses can here and there pick out some suggestion of the general effect, it is not safe to hazard

any opinion of the Abbe's powers

as a 'reciter' of his own work till an orchestral hearing is vouchsafed."

We have only space for one more gem :

"He has made a very large study of the Gregorian styles, admits an affection for Bach and Cherubini, and as a priest in holy orders he wears the usual black cassock so familiar on the Continent."

"The limited exigencies" of language would fail us if we attempted an indication of our ideas on this performance. But we can just find words enough to ask what paper of moderate influence and circulation—and we understand that *The Daily Mail* now claims The Largest Circulation in The World—would dare to print such stuff about Politics, or Literature, or Sport, or even the Drama, as is here perpetrated in the name of Music. And yet, if we could look inside men's heads, we should find Music running there ten times as often as Politics, and perhaps more often than anything else. We need not apologise further for this number of *The Dome*, or for the founding of *The Chord*.





“ALLESSANDRO DEL BORRO”

After the Painting by VELASQUEZ at Berlin.

(Reproduced by arrangement with Mr. F. HANFSTAENGL.)

VELASQUEZ AND HIS MODERN FOLLOWERS

THE celebration at Madrid of the tercentenary of the birth of Velasquez can hardly make his name better known than it is at present. For the last ten years that name has been the watch-word of the greater part of the art world of Europe, and passes without challenge even in camps that are dominated by ideals that differ widely from his. The re-issue of Sir William Stirling-Maxwell's monumental work has made his personal history a matter of common knowledge, while Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson's profusely illustrated book has dealt at length with his painting. It is therefore unnecessary to dwell at length upon the details of his life or achievement, yet, at the same time, it may perhaps be worth while to consider the grounds on which his extraordinary reputation is based. Extraordinary that reputation certainly must be which Mr. Whistler and Mr. Ruskin unite in upholding, for the artistic ideals of other generations would hardly bear such a test. Raphael, for instance, now may seem to many of us only a masterly academician, for the indiscriminating flattery of century after century lavished upon work that is undeniably mediocre makes the honest man inclined to question the merit even of the things that move him most deeply. Who can look at a garish empty pot-boiler, such as the Garvagh Raphael in the National Gallery, without a feeling of shame, nay, almost of anger, that it should come from the hand that drew the cartoon of "The Charge to Peter," and painted "The Mass of Bolsena"?

Certainly with Velasquez such doubts do not trouble us. Except in the works of his boyhood, such as the "Christ in the House of Martha," at Trafalgar Square, he is always supremely skilful, is one of the very few artists who, like Van Eyck and

Durer, are never unequal. When as a young man he imitated Ribera and painted our "Adoration of the Shepherds," he was already a thoroughly accomplished professional, who had nothing to learn from the most masterly technician of his own country; and how brilliant a craftsman Ribera was may be seen from his picture of the same subject in the Louvre.

Had Velasquez never left Spain he might have continued to paint so. His most perfect work, however, is the result of crossing this rather brutal adherence to fact—so characteristic of all the painters of his race—with the suavity of an older civilisation, a suavity not so much the surface polish that often only hides a lack of substantial worth, as the courtesy that comes of experience, of knowing that nothing is lost by good manners. At the age of thirty he was able to gratify a long-cherished wish and set out for Italy. Rome was his ultimate goal, but before reaching it he stopped for some time at Venice.

There his mental horizon widened still further. The bold arabesques of Tintoret suggested an ampler spacing, an enhancing of pictorial pattern, nay, of pictorial dignity, by the addition here or there of so much canvas in itself almost empty or at least unimportant. Possibly, too, the famous forest of spear shafts, which has given the nickname of *Las Lanzas* to "The Surrender of Breda," may have had its origin in that great painting in the church of S. Cassiano, where the Venetian master has raised the crosses of the crucifixion far aloft against a twilight sky, above the banners and pikes and upturned faces of a silent army. It was, however, from Titian that he learned most. His admiration for the Venetian master is testified not only by his recorded saying to the effect that "I do not like Raphael at all, . . . and Titian is the greatest of Italian men," but also by the magnificent specimens of Titian's work which he acquired for his royal patron.

In his great predecessor he recognised a kindred spirit, as dignified as himself, who knew the beauty of Nature, and yet recognised, perhaps more fully than any of his countrymen, those subtle beauties of pictorial art by which Nature is chosen and purified to serve the purposes of Decoration. From Titian he learned the secrets of that suave blending of pigment with pigment that makes the masses of a picture come together, the pleasantness

to be found in the very material of a picture, and the way to refine particular hues to form a definite and harmonious colour-scheme out of elements naturally at variance. Recognising with instinctive taste the desirability, nay, the necessity, of such elements as these in every beautiful picture, he was nevertheless too thorough a lover of Nature to sacrifice his personality for them. Hence, where Titian often sacrifices Nature outright, Velasquez is content to take her only in the moods of which he approves. Knowing how largely an artist when painting in his studio can control the lighting of his subject, and thereby its form, and to a great extent its colour also, he is careful to paint his models under an illumination which, while compelling breadth and simplicity, is sufficiently akin to the effect of ordinary daylight to prevent a figure looking forced or unnatural. Dignity, being a matter of attitude and spacing, is always within his reach. Perhaps, however, his breadth of view is shown most completely in his landscapes, for there he at once gives up the determined naturalism of his studio practice, recognising that the conventional tones of art are the only possible means of making good pictures out of the fierce contrasts of outdoor light and colour. It is in this clear discernment of the ultimate superiority of the claims of art to the claims of nature that Velasquez differs from the majority of his followers in the present century.

Of these, Whistler and Manet are undoubtedly the most important. In Mr. Whistler's portraits we get often the actual tones and colours of Velasquez, and a handling looser and more changeful, but hardly less skilful. The modern master, however, has none of the Spaniard's ingrained love of veracity—of truth for truth's sake. He is a realist only because the vital artistic movement of his time was towards realism, and in the selection for the materials for the exercise of his art he is as fastidious as Velasquez himself. Far from seeking to master the difficult, and often unpleasant, problems of open-air painting, he chooses rather to set all his figures in a half-light from which only the significant features, gestures, or accessories can emerge. A connoisseur of the finest side of the art of Japan, he is ever on the lookout for harmonies in odd pale colours, and for novel appositions of line and tone to freshen an art which might, otherwise seem too slight for the labour involved in its production. It would indeed be

difficult to quote a case in which a modern has done work so thoroughly imbued with fine tradition, and yet so fresh, so skilful, and so personal.

All these last epithets may be applied to the work of Manet as well; but on him the tradition of the past had a very different effect. While for Whistler, Velasquez was a portrait painter with a true eye, a sure hand, and an exquisite gift of selection; for Manet he was the first realist, the first man who had had the courage to paint people as he actually saw them, with the light that really illuminated them, with the air that really bathed them. Just then as Whistler developed his theory of fastidious choice, so Manet tried to make further advances in the direction of painting things as they actually look; at first in the artificial daylight of a studio, and afterwards in the open air. Though his brush work is extremely brilliant and summary, his pigment often wonderfully pleasant, and his skill in arrangement quite remarkable, there is no doubt that his pictures are not always comfortable things to be with, even in a large gallery.

The causes of this are not hard to discover. An uncompromising realist has to put up with natural effects of light and air, which are not often as harmonious as the effects which the trained hand can produce, any more than the sounds of the wind or of water, the cries of birds or animals, are as melodious as the playing of a good violinist. Mr. Whistler himself, in his famous lecture, speaks, if I remember rightly, of the twilight "when Nature, who for once has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist." The time that Manet, and many others after him, too often chose as a setting for their subjects was the glare of midday—when Nature is rarely in tune, and often very much out of it. But when Nature is out of tune, the poor realist, if he has the courage of his convictions, will also have to be out of tune, and that means inharmonious colour. Again, as I mentioned in a previous article, you can't *imitate* Nature's high lights or Nature's deep shadows with pigment, and any honest effort at copying the tones of a bright landscape produces a sky and distance that are nearly white, while even the foreground will be exceedingly pale, unless it contains some strong local colour. Inside a house the trained eye may still recognise what the sketch is intended for, but the thing is pitched in a key much higher than that of any

interior, and therefore can only look well (if it ever does so) out of doors in a similar light to that by which it was painted.

The same disadvantage attends pictures painted in modern studios with glass roofs, which flood figures with a singularly uncomplimentary illumination quite unlike that in which they are usually seen either indoors or out of it. Of course every man has a right to his own way of thinking; no one can forcibly stop a painter from putting his sitters under the glare of a top light, and painting them with the latest fashion in square brushwork, nor is there any law to prevent people having their portraits painted with the most disagreeable colours, methods, and effects. The real sin is in using the name of Velasquez as a cloak to veil these offences. Velasquez was a prince among realists, but he was an artist first. When he copied Nature he took care first to choose an aspect of Nature which was worth copying, even from the point of view of his great predecessors, whose aim had been only to make good pictures. It is a pity that some of our contemporaries cannot take the same precaution.

The brilliant work of Mr. Sargent, for instance, often suffers from a lack of forethought in apparently small matters. If a lady wears a dress that is the least bit too loud in colour, Mr. Sargent is too conscientious to conceal it by any tempering of the garish fact. If a man's complexion catches his studio light oddly, the painter does not seem to think it his duty to pose his model otherwise, but depicts the unpleasant points just as forcibly as the pleasant ones. Hence he is always a painter of casual aspect, rather than of that inward reality which makes the work of Mr. Watts so vividly interesting, and which has proved in the long run to be the ultimate test which separates the portrait-painter of the first rank from his lesser brethren. It is perhaps from his lack of sympathy with the spirit of his sitters that Mr. Sargent is driven to rely more and more upon mere brilliance of execution to interest the spectator; still, many of his recent portraits are little more than astonishing exercises in pigment, which can never become great works of art from sheer redundancy of points of minor interest. Contrast them for a moment with really scholarly work, such as the portraits of Mr. Charles Shannon, and you will see that their superabundance of skill is so much dead weight when matched with a skill ordered and moderated everywhere

except at the decisive point. Certainly, among our younger artists, Mr. Charles Shannon is the one who seems to have appreciated the great Spaniard with the most absolute justice.

Lastly, it is perhaps worth while pointing out that though Velasquez is a very great and exquisite artist, his range is, after all, rather limited. His colour is invariably fine, but the colour of Titian is infinitely more varied. His habit of mind was serious and dignified, but was narrow compared with the fervid genius of Michael Angelo, the brooding insight of Rembrandt, or the prolific invention of Rubens. His drawing is the drawing of a painter, and cannot therefore be properly compared with that of draughtsmen like Leonardo, or Holbein, or Durer. The one point on which he is perhaps superior to almost all other painters is the evenness of his excellence. His refinement never seems to fail him. He is always dignified, always an exquisite painter—so invariably, in fact, that the ease of his handling comes almost to have the appearance of a receipt. Other great men, Titian and Rubens, for instance, sometimes perform feats with the brush which pass beyond the most brilliant passages in the work of Velasquez, but he still remains the almost unique instance of an artist who has left a great mass of important work, and who was wise enough never to attempt anything which he could not do perfectly.

C. J. Holmes.

THE PASSING GHOST

THROUGH the caves of night, dumbfounded,
By blind negation bounded,
 In the weary round of doom
 I have reached the ancient room—
 The old familiar room
Once I slept in who am dead.
Is there someone in the bed?
There is someone in my stead.
 Yet I shiver with delight
 In the throbbing
 And the sobbing
 Of the icy wells of night.

See the dark a sweet release
 To the sleeper as he sleeps :
Of the dark to win surcease,
 See the spectre how he weeps
Dusty flakes from withered eyes—
 Ashes from a charnel spring!—
With the whisper of sunrise
 He must be upon the wing.
Ere the daisy lifts its lashes;
Ere the dawn the roof-ridge washes,
 He must turn him in affright;
 He must turn him from the light
 To the throbbing
 And the sobbing
 Of the icy wells of night.

To follow, as I shiver,
Night round the world for ever,
 That—that is my doom.
 Yet I have reached the room,
And so may reach again :—
Oh, ecstasy in pain!
 Oh, wild taper in my gloom!

Is he dreaming, as I shake
Standing here? He doth awake,
 Slumber-warm, content-replete;
Sees the light across the ceiling
Like a jack-o'-lanthorn stealing
 From the waggon in the street;—
 Turns him happy with a sigh,
 Thinking "Day comes by and by."

Yes, to him with all delight :—
 And my hollow heart is shaken
 By the thoughts that mad awaken
 In the throbbing
 And the sobbing
Of the icy wells of night.

To follow, as I shiver.
Night round the world for ever :—
And the silence of the moon
Is my spectral dead high-noon;
 And the stars alway—
Rowelled spurs that goad
Me on my dark road—
 Drive me from the day.

When the morning horn makes thunder,
 When the cow wakes in her stall,
When a happy wind comes under
 The doorway in the hall,

THE DOME

When the twitter of the lark
 Seems the turning of the wards
In the lock of the close dark,
 And a sound comes from the fords ;
When a shapeless blot doth gloom
In the blackness of the room
 From the casement—in abasement
I must turn me to my doom :
I must turn me in affright
 To the throbbing
 And the sobbing
Of the icy wells of night :
I must turn me to my doom :—
Yet I have reached the room,
 And so may reach again,
 Winning ecstasy in pain,
Seeing light within the gloom.

Bernard Capes.

VERBORG'NE LIEBE

The Words by BJ. BJÖRNSSEN.

The Music by FRITZ DELIUS.

(Reproduced, by arrangement, from "7 LIEDER VON FRITZ DELIUS."

London: Augener & Co.)

Verborg'ne Liebe.

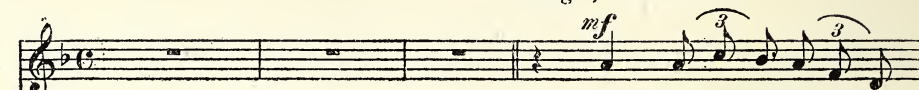
Bj. Björnsen.

Secret Love.

English words by W. Grist.

Allegro, con sentimento.

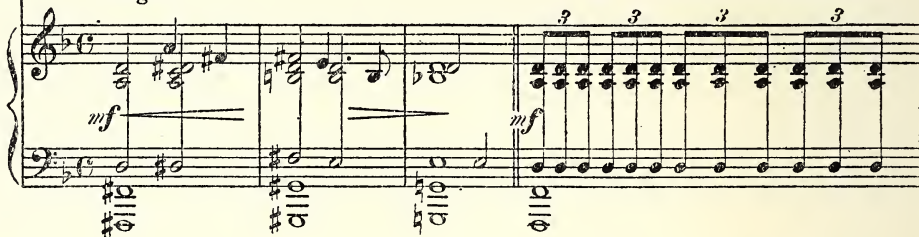
VOICE.



Er schlich sich die Wän.de ent -
He fur - tive - ly roved near the

Adagio.

PIANO.



lang. _____
wall, _____

Sie lu - stig im Tan - ze sich
She joy - ous - ly danced in the



schwäng. _____
ball, _____

Ihr Au - ge so hell
With eyes bright and mild

lacht' man - chem Ge - sell;
On ma - ny she smiled;



VERBORG'NE LIEBE

101

ihm woll - te das Herz schier er - star - ren, doch
His heart to a chill stone was turn ing; None

Più Lento.

das hat Nie-mand er - fah - ren.
saw the love that was yearn - ing.

f

p

Tempo I.

Er kam um zu scheiden ins' Haus, — sie trieb's in den Gar-ten hin.
A time came for him to take leave, — She roamed in the gar-den to

mf

aus-
grieve. — Sie weint, und sie weint, zu
She wept, and she wept, While

cresc.

f

ster - ben sie meint; sie hatt' ihn ge - lie - bet seit Jah - ren,
 death - on - ward crept, Her heart for him long years was yearn - ing,

sie hatt' ihn ge - lie - bet seit Jah - ren, — sie hatt' ihn ge -
 Her heart for him long years was yearn - ing, — Her heart for him

dim. *p* Più Lento, molto tranquillo.
 lie - bet seit Jah - ren. Doch das hat Nie - mand er -
 long years was yearn - ing, None saw the love that was

fah - ren.
 burn - ing.

VERBORG'NE LIEBE

103

Tempo I.

f

Ihm wur-den die Jah-re zur Qual.
Years were to him wear-i-some pain.

f

clip

mp

So kehr-te er wie-der ein-mal. Sie hat-te es gut; in
So home-ward he came once a-gain. Her woes found re-lease She

mp

Più Lento.

f *ff* *dim.* *mf*

Frie-den sie ruht; ihr Herz thät sie treu ihm be-wah-ren. Doch das hat Nie-mand'er.
rests now in peace, From him was her heart nev-er turn-ing, None saw the love that was

f *ff* *dim.* *mf*

clip

mp *p* *Molto Adagio.*

fah-ren.
yearn-ing.

mp *p* *pp*

PADEREWSKI

After a Drawing by EDWARD BURNE-JONES.

(Reproduced by arrangement with Mr. F. HOLLYER.)



IRRESPONSIBILITIES

1. PADEREWSKI

(An Afterthought)

ONE day my soul, sharpset with academic vinegar, was fed with lovely sugary art,—Paderewski and Chopin, Cupid and Psyche. The union of the white velvet touch, delicately firm as a panther's tread, with the languorous sweetness of Chopin—such exotic perfumed music, tropically wild, coquettish, feminine and yet masterful! I basked in the exquisite affectation of it all; my soul purred like a cat on a sunny wall, and anon wailed like a cat in a moonlit garden—when the Funeral March proceeded in that arrestively original manner, ironically triumphant. . . .

Sometimes I think I like Paderewski best when he lets thought go, and addresses himself to the production of mere beautiful sound. For, in his hands, beauty is a vital symbol. From him, sheer isolated beauty of tone, rhythm, and technical perfection conveys more than the most intellectual or impassioned music. It shows us the passive reflection of that which we seek, the shadow which oppresses us. There before our eyes is the "one flower absent from all bouquets" mirrored in a crystal well of liquid sound, and glowing with all the soft, soothing unreality of a picture. We gaze in delicious apathy. We could, in some slight measure, grasp the significance of Thought or of Passion; but here, where there is nothing to understand save inexplicable perfection, our baffled brains feel there might be fathomless deeps for them to plumb with all a plumber's premonition of failure. So we cast our thoughts adrift on a capricious ecstasy of sound. The wayward magic of a mazurka in its fluttering tempo-rubato,

ear-enchancing, fills us with delight. The notes are irresponsibly graceful as velvet butterflies sailing the air on jewelled wings,—wings that rhythmically glitter and flash,—and yet, now and then, they are wickedly soft as little white ghost-moths flying by night. Or some prettily intricate study tickles our heart through our hearing with the joy of rapid motion and the sense of the lightning-swift weaving of sinuous patterns. No programme is read into the charming diversion; it is played, with all the simplicity of genius, as a study. Our sense of beauty finds exquisite ease; our entire being merges into our art-sense; for a little space the artist in us lives free of humanity. We cannot feel the slightly rococo sentiment of Chopin; we are freed from emotion as we are freed from thought: we have reached an artistic Nirvana.

What genius is so exquisitely and deliberately detached from the mind as Chopin's genius? And what artist can so exquisitely detach himself from his mind as Paderewski? He gives us a spiritual opiate which inspires in us wonderful formless dreams. Our sleeping emotions are free to any dream that may lift the latch of sleep; our minds lie brilliantly blank to impression; we are in a perfectly receptive and vacant mood. . . .

If we could think, we should envy the man who has the power of escaping from others and from himself into a tone-created world of Absolute Beauty,—a tone-gardener forcing white dream flowers of enchanted sound, in the hot-house of Chopin, for the Elect of Sentimentalists.

2. FELIX MOTTL

(A Study in Scarlet)

FELIX MOTTL is the prophet of Passion. He has been endowed with a perfect whirlwind of emotion, which he keeps splendidly under control. If I were to fit him with a suitable motto, I would crave your pardon for the unfortunate appropriateness of the words as applied to a conductor, and choose: "No past is mine, no future: look at me!" For his passion is divinely present, ecstatically sharp; his genius overbrims music with wine of delirium, spiritual alcohol, that sets the listener's nerves quivering in ecstasy, as it runs along them like fire. Nothing is far away from Mottl,—his world is compressed within the compass of a magic ring of the flames of his own excitement. You have only to compare his conceptions of "Lohengrin" and "Tristan" to learn what a hopeless specialist he is, and to discover at once his weakness and his strength. The languor of the fairy-tale is upon "Lohengrin"; the wonder and mystery of legend and the dawn chillness; that music is far withdrawn from the present, it was written once upon a time; its tone-colours are transparent and ethereal, for all their intensity; it is dreamy and beautiful as it is far-away. Mottl has no instinct for legend. The sentiment of "Lohengrin" is too exquisitely remote for him; he feels the ecstasy of the Supernatural, but not the remoteness; he brings his swan very nearly to land. In his hands exaltation becomes intoxication. "Lohengrin," appealing, as it does, to the senses through the imagination, does not suit Mottl. Whereas "Tristan," appealing to the imagination through the senses, audibly working out its own salvation, is the supreme medium for Mottl's expression of himself. Here Mottl's passion has a miraculous range of delicate tone-gradations: the fine-drawn ecstasy of it in the tense love duet hushes the very critic to a spiritual exaltation. With bated breath, as emotion deepens, he watches the music burn, by unconsidered, logical miracle, from red to white—a fine white flame at its keenest. Mottl of the Scarlet Sentiment, of all conductors gives the most delicately spiritual interpretation of "Tristan." At that white heat

the music is remote in spite of itself, in spite of Mottl; it withdraws ecstatically; love is seen, as it should be seen, through the wrong end of a telescope; past and future merge into a breathlessly remote present which is, in one word, Eternity.

How marvellously Mottl gives the splashing sea music, which so enhances the effect of the fiery love music in that most elemental of music-dramas. Those cool, salt themes, blue-green in tone-colour, with their dolphin-like rhythms, are a deliciously cool setting for the white heat of the love themes. Mottl thoroughly appreciates this, as also the careless abandon of the sailors' songs in contrast with the strenuous abandon of the lovers' songs. The latter form of abandon is the more sympathetic to Mottl: he is hopelessly erotic. To those of us who love to bear the brunt of things beautiful, to feel the white horses of passion's sea charge and break, deliriously violent, bang on our meek heads, Mottl is a gift of the gods. Those of us who can never have enough, Mottl comes near to satisfying. As you may have experienced, he has a peculiar, persuasive power over the blood: he fairly makes you see scarlet! He is as much at home with the primal emotions as is the wind with the sea, and he has the delightful and estimable power of making you psychologically sea-sick. He has, likewise, a wonderful instinct for the musical *mot juste* (unique note, I suppose),—such as Jean de Reszke's "Isolde!" just as Tristan dies,—which comes to him brilliantly in a single ecstasy, raying sparks of fire; it springs so suddenly upon him that one might term its advent an attack. Mottl is, needless to say, intensely modern in feeling, but candour admits that he has an occasional healthy reversion to the Neolithic Age, and thoroughly appreciates, even anticipates, the Bath bun element in the "Lenzlied" of Siegmund. I have often remarked with amusement how his baton arm fairly quivers with unsuppressed vitality—vitality, mind you, not emotion (you and I are perhaps the only people who apprehend the difference between them)—when he comes to an agonisingly dainty bit.

To me Mottl's sentiment feels quite Magyar: it resembles that of the gypsy fiddlers of Hungary, and certainly it has a Hungarian swing, power and sharp rhythm, slightly held back, it is true, by an inextricable Teutonic deliberateness. By a curious paradox, Mottl has a tendency to drag his music a little. I think he likes

to linger over it ; but even if we admit that excuse, we must also admit that this dragging tendency puts a bizarre contradictory point upon him. Yet he has, in spite of this, a Hungarian brilliancy of attack. Violence is his atmosphere : like a hunting cheetah, he goes for his prey. His splendid energies can brace even a Liszt Symphonic Poem into something better than sugar and water. No one could ever mistake Mottl for an Englishman or for a Slav ; he simply cannot take his pleasures sadly. He has not the remotest apprehension of pathos, though he very well understands, say, Grieg's romantic troubles. But then Grieg, a dainty crocodile, enjoys himself too naïvely and too thoroughly to be ever very pathetic. Mottl feels the instant pathos of deep emotion, but no fanciful or impersonal pathos is within in his mental grasp. Therefore he cannot interpret the inner Tschai-kowsky at all. The spirit of the Pathetic Symphony is completely outside his ken, though he gives the sharp rhythm and brilliant tone-colour of the music their full measure of intensity. Nerves appeal to him. The hysterical splendours of the march movement in his hands take on an alien strength ; consequently he makes that march even more flamboyantly magnificent than it is. And the pathos of the first and last movements—he misses utterly ! But why should he feel anything so half-hearted as pathos ? With him it is all or nothing ; the indecisive shades of self-torturing modernity trouble him not at all. He feels the grand impressionist things of life, not the little faltering intimate things. Nothing sorrowful quite appeals to him. His temperament is too masterful for sorrow. For this reason he does not bring out of Siegfried's Death March all the glorious melancholy that is in it. He gives us the Magyar swing, but the inner feeling is to seek, till the love theme of the Volsungs appears—and then Mottl is again in his element, strenuously tender. I am quite sorry when I hear the first act of "Die Walküre" interpreted by any conductor other than Mottl. The alien leader almost never fails to fall short of intoxication, he *never* gets enough way on, and he always forgets to fuse the languor of Spring with the ardency of the music. There is ever a sense of green buds in that "Walküre" music. None of the other conductors has Mottl's fine discretion in audible affairs of the heart ; his sense of passion is unique. Take him and one or two of his distinguished

colleagues, and compare their respective readings of that tawniest and fieriest of chestnuts, the Prelude of "Tristan" (your pardon! but it is the most subjectively impassioned thing obtainable). With Richter it is suave, sustained, and lady-like; with Henry Wood, it is incoherent, indefinite, and poetic; with Mottl it is lyrically passionate and Asiatically intense. Oh, exquisite fluid prelude! "Tristan," being the final expression of the supreme emotion, remains, undoubtedly, Mottl's final medium for self-expression. Indeed, so intimately identified with "Tristan" is Felix, that you need only hear one other than this gem among leaders conduct that opera to appreciate the difference between a jewel and stained glass.

Israfel.

THE WANDERERS

(*After Mæterlinck*)

SCENE:—*A vast plain stretching unbroken to the horizon on every side, and shades of evening settling quickly down. There is a pale yellow glow in the western sky, barred by heavy tiers of cloud. To the east the sky is clear, but deepens into the purple of night. A few pools of glistening water, long and narrow, zigzag across the waste, with sparse tufts of rushes and other herbage on their margins. Into the foreground, from the west, and casting long pale shadows before them, enter a man and woman (EULALIE and HERMÁLFRED), tall, and clad in loose mediæval costume; she, with girdle and pendants; he, with leather belt well furnished.*

EULALIE:—How dark it grows! I can scarce see the track.

HERMÁLFRED (*stooping and looking*):—Nor I!—there is no track.

EULALIE (*looking up alarmed*):—But we were on it a moment since! We must find it; we must go back and look.

HERMÁLFRED:—It has been growing fainter for some time. I doubt if we shall find it.

EULALIE (*speaking breathlessly*):—But it would not stop here, in the middle of the plain; whoever travelled thus far would go farther. Come, let us look, Hermálfred. (*She turns back.*)

HERMÁLFRED (*taking her hand and arresting her*):—It is of no use, Eulalie; I am sure it is of no use. We had better hasten on. Night is falling, and we have still far to go. See, there is as yet nothing visible on the horizon!

EULALIE (*anxiously, and shading her eyes*):—I cannot see the horizon, it is so dark. And how can we go further with no track

and no landmarks? I grow fearful, Hermálfred :—it is so strange ; it used not to be so far.

HERMÁLFRED (*reassuringly*) :—Perhaps we were on the wrong track? Even so ; it is best to go forward. We may sight something to steer our course by.

EULALIE (*distressed, and stretching out her hands*) :—We ought to have sighted the tower long ago. It stands so high—so high, Hermálfred, above the topmost pines..

HERMÁLFRED :—You are certain it lay due east from our starting point?

EULALIE :—Yes, yes ; quite sure.

HERMÁLFRED :—Well, then, the sun set due west to-night, and in a line with those two tufts of rushes. (*He points behind.*) I marked it well. If we keep them in line behind us, we shall go due east.

EULALIE.—But we shall not see them long ;—it darkens so ! Ah, if we could but find the track ! (*She clasps her hands.*) Perhaps the moon will rise?

HERMÁLFRED :—Nay, there will be no moon to-night. . . . But are you *quite* sure, Eulalie, that your old home with the tower lay due east?

EULALIE (*hurriedly*) :—Yes, yes ! . . . (*she hesitates, then throws up her arms despairingly*). No, ah no ! I am not sure ; I grow bewildered . . . my head turns. Ah me ! where are we ? . . . Let me sit down, just a moment, Hermálfred . . . I will try to think. (*She puts her hand to her head distractedly.*)

HERMÁLFRED :—Nay, do not sit down. Give me your burden, and let me lead you. It is better to keep on. (*He takes her by the hand.*)

EULALIE :—Let us search and search for the track, Hermálfred. Surely we may find it ! . . . Ah, if we could, if we *could*.

(*They move round slowly, searching, while the last gleam fades out of the west, and black night descends. At the same time, sheet lightning begins to play far off round the horizon, its gleams making the intervening darkness seem only thicker and more oppressive.*)

HERMÁLFRED :—There is a storm brewing ; and we can reach no shelter to-night. I would we had not come, Eulalie. You said it was not far ;—and it is terribly far !

EULALIE :—Where are our lamps? We must light the lamps.

Here, here! (*drawing them out of her bundle, which she has taken from him*). Light them; quick!

HERMÁLFRED:—Where is the tinder? (*He searches.*) I can find no tinder.

EULALIE (*searching wildly*):—Ah me! Ah me! I thought it was in your sack, Hermálfred:—it ought to have been in your sack!

HERMÁLFRED:—After all, the lamps would not serve much. We must sit down and wait till daybreak. . . . If only we had shelter!

EULALIE (*shuddering*):—But I fear the dark; an unaccountable fear lays hold of me. Come close, Hermálfred; close! (*She clings to his arm and points.*) See! there is light there, on the pool. Let us go to it; it is strangely bright.

HERMÁLFRED:—I do not like it. It is an unnatural gleam. The water trails like a snake; and the light flits and flits.

EULALIE (*pleadingly*):—Let us go to it, Hermálfred. Any light is better than none. (*She draws him along. The phosphorescent light glows brighter, and flits more and more restlessly over the pool.*)

HERMÁLFRED:—What a strange odour! It came before, but faintly. Here it overpowers. I do not like it. (*He holds back.*)

EULALIE (*drawing deep breaths*):—Ah, what a wonderful odour! I seem to have smelt it long, long ago, before memory began. It is old, and yet new. It blesses; it heals! . . . I have no fear now, Hermálfred. I will sit down here.

(*She grows calm and happy. He places the bundles on the ground, and she sits down, while he stands beside her and looks round apprehensively. The lightning flashes are more frequent.*)

EULALIE (*rapt, and in slow, soothing tones*):—Sit down, Hermálfred—here—beside me—and listen! I can tell you all now. Everything is becoming clear in those early days that had grown so misty,—that were nigh forgotten. How glad I am we have come!

HERMÁLFRED:—But we have lost our way, Eulalie! And who knows if we shall ever find it,—that distant home of yours? . . . I begin to doubt—to doubt it all. (*He sits down, anxious and despondent.*) I would we had not come.

EULALIE (*taking his hand, and speaking in a dreamy voice*):—

In the early, early morning, Hermálfred, we will waken to the sound of the fountain splashing far down in the court below, while the milkmaids—twelve of them—wash their white wooden buckets in the cool clear water. Then we will look out of window, and watch them in their blue skirts and high white caps crossing the red-tiled court and passing from under the low dark archway out into the sunshine beyond, and away down the fresh meadow to the river, where the cows stand lowing beneath the willows. It is all so still, Hermálfred; and yet there is sound;—some one clear, beautiful sound always in the silence. Not, as it has been in the city,—so many sounds entangled and struggling together;—never one full and free. . . . (*She makes as if to rise.*) Come, Hermálfred, let us go, let us hasten. We shall be there by dawn.

HERMÁLFRED:—Hush, Eulalie!—you are dreaming, you rave. It is this odour, this terrible odour! It gets upon the brain. Come away! Come back with me! (*He gets up.*)

EULALIE (*who talks on not heeding, and remains seated*):—There is no lamp in the tower at night, but a bell rings the watches, and the sky is starlit and clear. And in the day it is always bright; such floods of sunshine everywhere, in the red-tiled court, on the green bottom of the fountain basin, in the old garden within the moat, with its high fruit-covered walls; and in the tapestry room too. It poured in through the long low windows on the beautiful ladies with their silk embroidered gowns, who sat spinning, or stitching pictures of the boar-hunt and of the home-coming of my father with his young men. I brought them flowers from the meadow, and sat and watched as they copied them on the canvas. Always, always sunshine;—think of that, Hermálfred! How it reddened the trunks of the great pines, and filled the air with their warm scent! (*She throws back her head and draws deep breaths.*)

HERMÁLFRED (*who has stared at her, listening, and now lays his hand almost roughly on her shoulder*):—Wake up, Eulalie, wake up! This is wild talk;—you dream. Ah, I *fear* me that you dream! See! the storm gathers; it will burst;—and we have no shelter,—none! Come, let us grope for sticks and stones and pile them up into a refuge. I will be busy to deaden these mad thoughts. Your words but rend me between wild hope and torturing fear. We will leave this ghostly pool with its strange light that has no radiance. Come! (*She holds back, but he draws*

her on, still talking). . . . A little way, a little way, Eulalie, till we can reason and are calm. Now we turn city-wards ; and can recall the life we left but yestermorn. It may be ours again. Think of our active days, the striving and the getting, the cheerful bustle of the market-place, the neighbours' gossip, their incomings and outgoings, the "to and fro," the blazing hearth, the comfort. . . .

EULALIE :—The sore heart and the weariness ! Ah no, I cannot go back, I cannot. (*She stands still.*)

HERMÁLFRED :—But here are sticks ! See,—gather ! (*He stoops to pick up an object by his feet ; it flashes and hisses, and he starts back in horror.*) Ah, God ! the snakes !

EULALIE :—Courage, Hermálfred ! 'Tis our fault that we wander here so aimlessly. Yonder 'twas better, safer.

HERMÁLFRED :—No, no. There is no safety ;—let us flee, flee. (*He hurries her on, but unconsciously they move in a circle and return towards the pool. He sees it, and raises his hands in dread.*) Look, look !—we cannot now go back, we *cannot*. And death, aye *death*, awaits us here ! I know it.

EULALIE :—Nay, nay ; take comfort, these are unmanly fears. A little while and 'twill be morning ;—you will laugh at them. Sit down again, and I will talk and tell you more. Such happy memories, such visions crowd ! At dawn, mayhap, we shall hear the watchman's bugle as he greets the sunrise from the top of the bell-tower ; it will sound so far in the still air. I stood beside him sometimes, I, a little child, when I had slipped from my nurse. And how the roofs of polished metal shone, as I gazed down on them, and feared to fall !

HERMÁLFRED :—I will hear no more, Eulalie ;—I dare not. This stifling, penetrating odour ! Come away from it. . . . Alas ! I too begin to dream.

EULALIE (*seizing both his hands*) :—Ah, *now* you understand ; you see it too ! What happiness ! . . . To-morrow, only to-morrow, Hermálfred, you will come with me to the great stables across the court and see the beautiful horses, forty of them, smooth and glossy, standing impatient in their stalls. They are ready saddled, and the silver bridles hang upon their necks. We will choose the lordliest, the swiftest, and we will ride and ride far down the valley, and come home at sunset with the cawing rooks.

I will bring such wreaths of flowers across my horse's neck;—the dear old flowers of my childhood. . . . (*She pauses as the lightning flashes vividly.*) And look, Hermálfred, — look! (*pointing to the edge of the pool*). . . . There are flowers here, strange, wonderful night-flowers! I did not see them before; but the scent comes from them. They grow and grow all along by the pool! They move! They get tall and straight and thick! (*She gazes at them, with outstretched hands.*) Ah, wonderful!

(*The lightning is now almost incessant.*)

HERMÁLFRED (*staring also, but drawing back*):—It is a fearsome plant, Eulalie. It is horrible! It steals the senses; it maddens you, it will madden me. Tear yourself from it; . . . come, come, or it will be too late. (*He turns aside, and thrusts his hands out as if to push something from him.*)

EULALIE (*with intense and joyful utterance, and pointing far in front*):—Now, now, Hermálfred! Behold, at last! Ah, joy! Yonder is the tower, the lordly tower, standing bright and clear as at noonday! . . . But the lightning goes, and it is hidden. . . . Yet I have seen it, I have *seen* it! You too, did you not see it? Give me your hand and we will hurry on. Before dawn we shall reach it; the lightning will show us the way. (*For a time there is increased darkness.*)

HERMÁLFRED:—No, no! you rave; you fright me. . . . My brain reels. There is subtle poison in this plant. There is Death here,—yes, Death and thick darkness. (*He gropes wildly round, and seems to totter.*) Ah God! I am giddy with doubt. What mean these dreams, these visions? Your home,—where is it, what is it? Is my very doubt madness? . . . Am I dreaming that you dream? . . . Mystery; horror on all sides! Loneliness, loneliness! Fear that maddens; and madness that brings fear! Come away, Eulalie (*he seizes her*); back, back to the city, to the haunts of men, and the daylight. (*She resists him, and he breaks from her.*)

EULALIE (*calling aloud*):—'Tis you who rave, not I, Hermálfred. The plant, the wonderful plant with its odour, has come to stifle fear. It wakes sweet memories that lay long hidden in my soul. And look! it covers itself with flowers, with purple bells and shining berries. I see them by the flickering light of the pool. They gather up the light; . . . ah, now they shine as

if by their own radiance! They gleam and glow; they are as torches;—they will lead us home. See! I will gather some. (*She laughs loud and exultingly, and runs towards the flowers with outstretched hand.*)

HERMÁLFRED (*turning back and shouting*):—No, no, Eulalie! Back, back, I say! You shall not touch it. It is evil, horrible! Let it go,—ah, let it go! (*He rushes towards her, but she seems not to hear him, and grasps a plant with both hands by the stem.*) Ah, mercy! . . . Ah, God! . . .

(*As she tears up the plant by the root, shrieks indescribably piercing and awful break from it, as from a soul new-damned. She lets go, and they both rush from it with wild gestures, crying*):

The mandrake! the mandrake!

(*Heavy thunder rolls overhead, and the plain, bright with the play of forked lightning, trembles. Mad horror distorts their faces, as they turn and glare at each other with hatred and despair. Then, snatching the poniards that hang sheathed from their belts, they rush and stab one another with maniacal fury, and fall dead.*)

Mary Ward.

THE FOXGLOVE

A wave of verdure sinks and swells
 Beneath the corn slope, lit and hewn
 To semblance of a golden dune,
And sea-like whispers fill the fells:

About the margin of the dells
 The foxglove-bells are blown and strewn,
 In films of purple and of prune,
Like evanescent ocean-shells,

That hold within their hollow cells
 The myriad music of earth's rune,—
 The song of bee and bird,—the tune
Of corn,—the bubbling laugh of wells.

Ethel Wheeler.

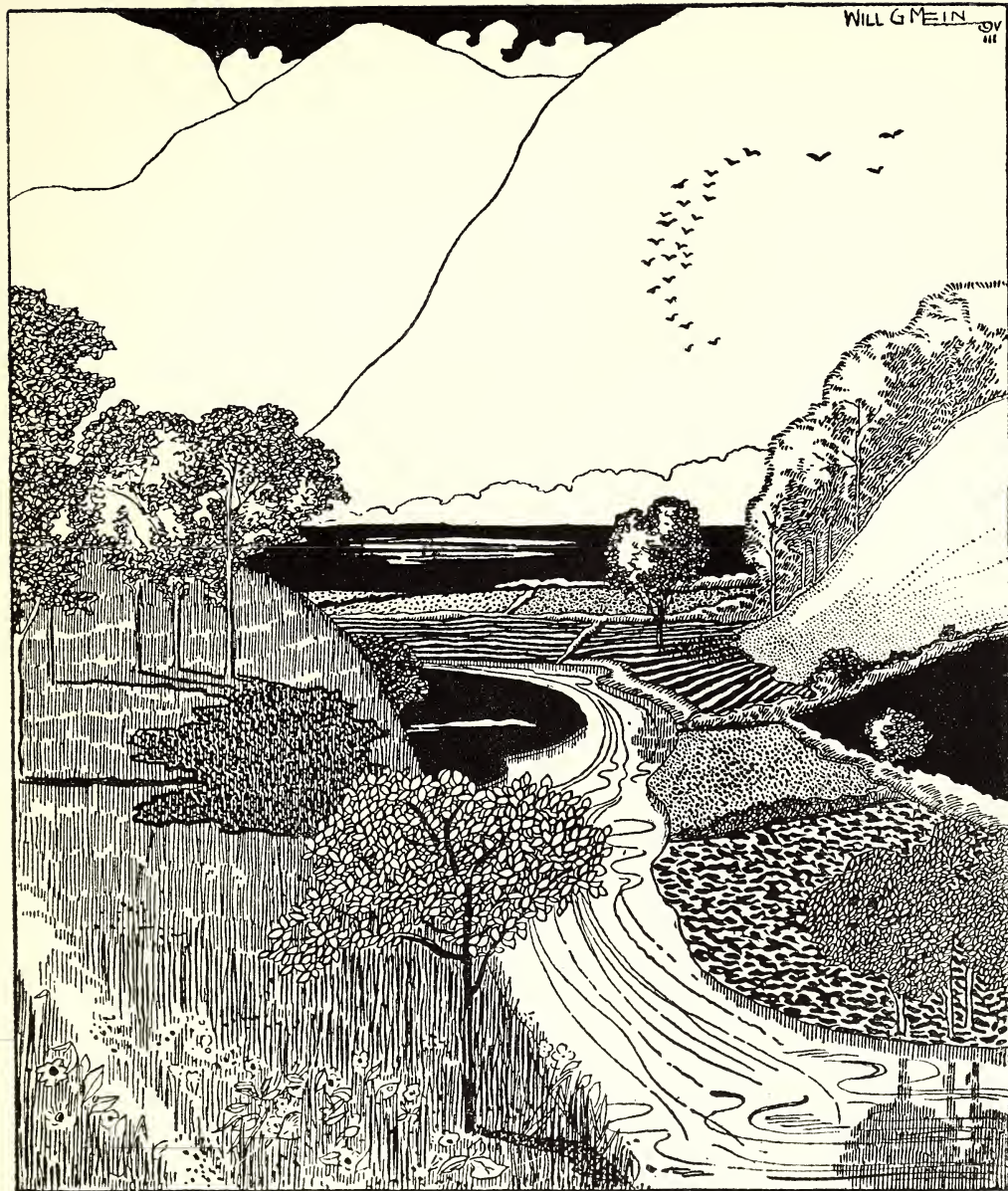
SIX DRAWINGS

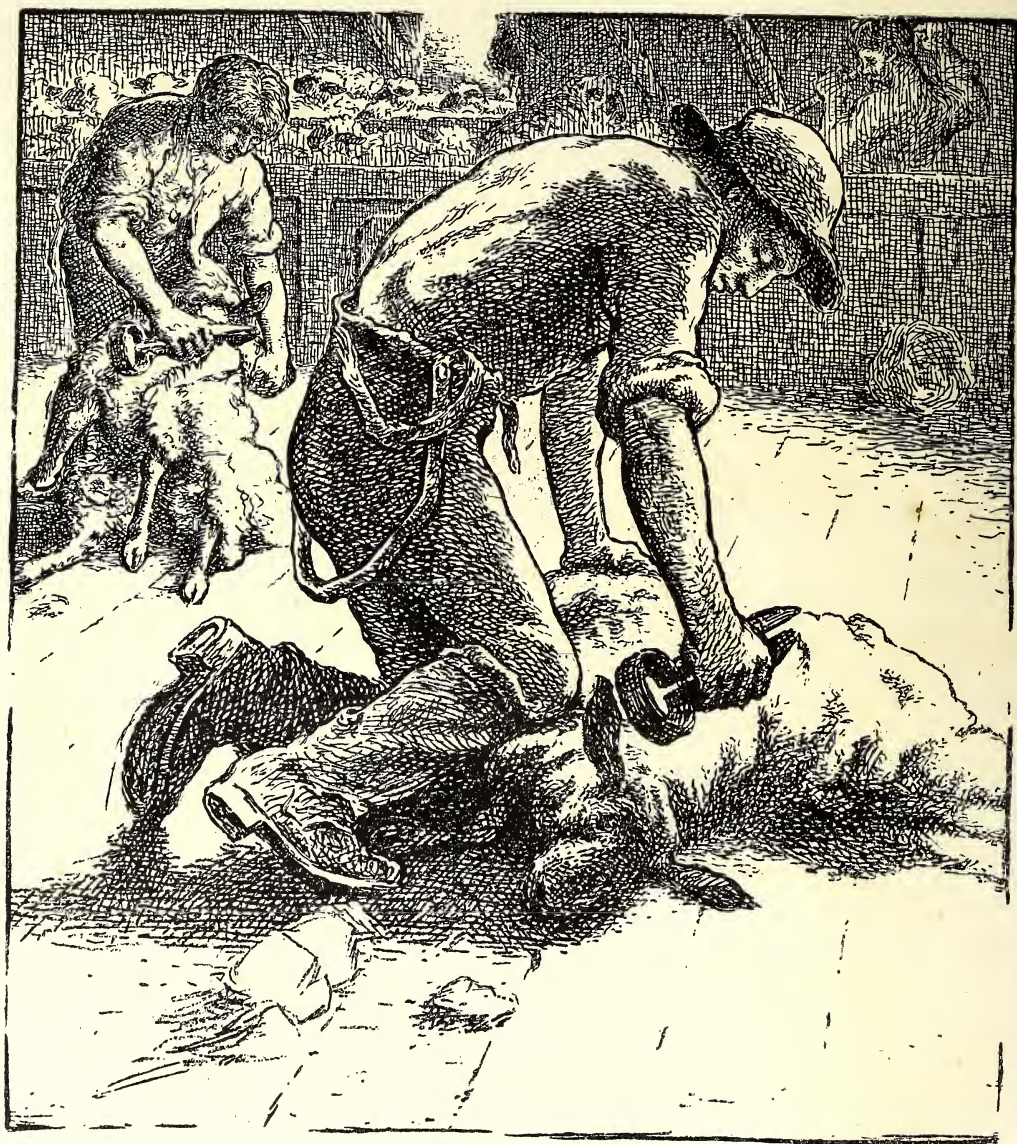
1. CAUCHEMAR. By Laurence Housman.
2. HIGHLAND LANDSCAPE. By Will G. Mein.
3. THE SHEEP-SHEARERS. By A. H. Fisher.
4. THE FARM-YARD. By Will G. Mein.
5. THE HARBOUR OF DESPAIR. By Will G. Mein.
6. THE CASTELL GATE (from *The House of Fame*, Book III.).
By H. W. Brewer.

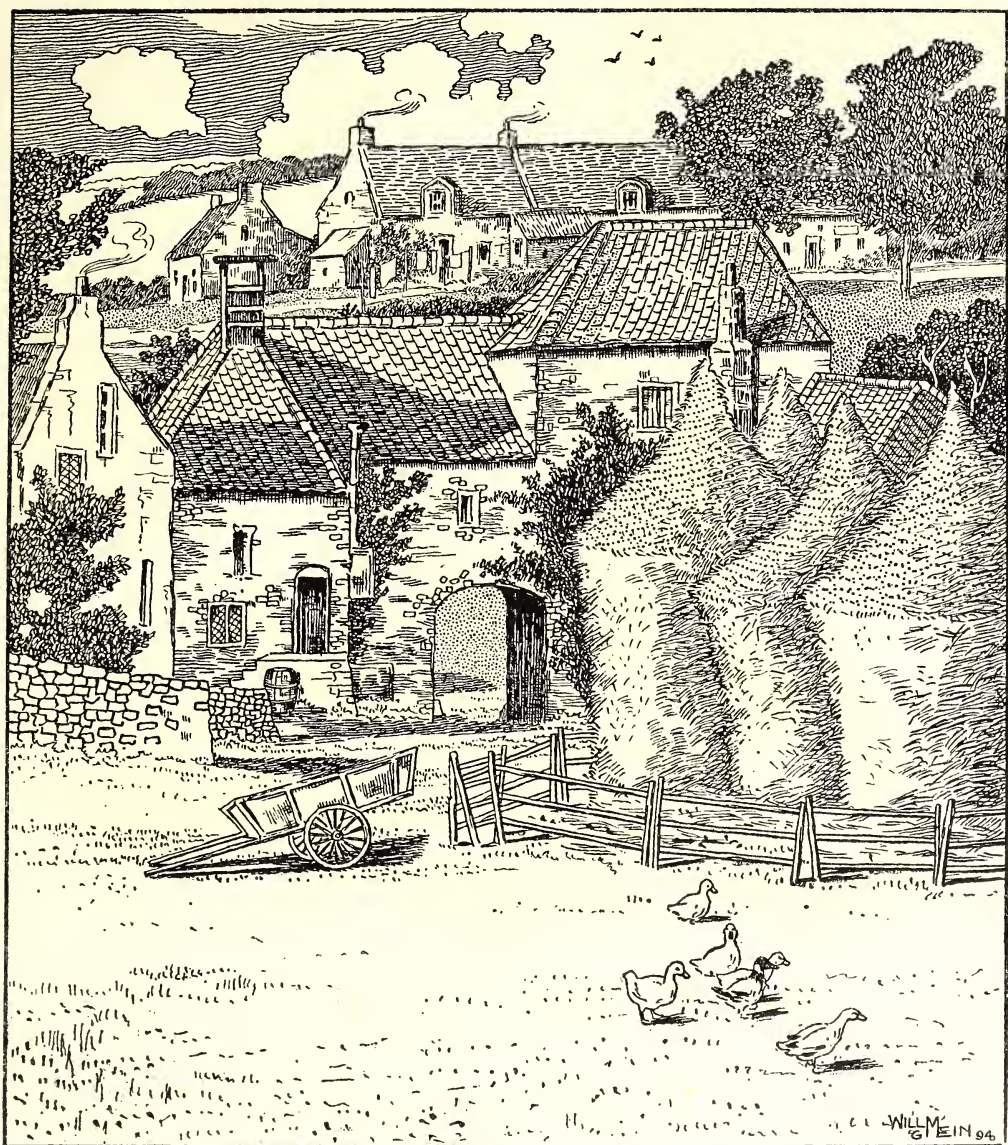
NOTE :—*Numbers 1, 3, 4, and 6 are printed on pure linen paper ("O. W."). They are backed by blank pages on account of its transparency.*







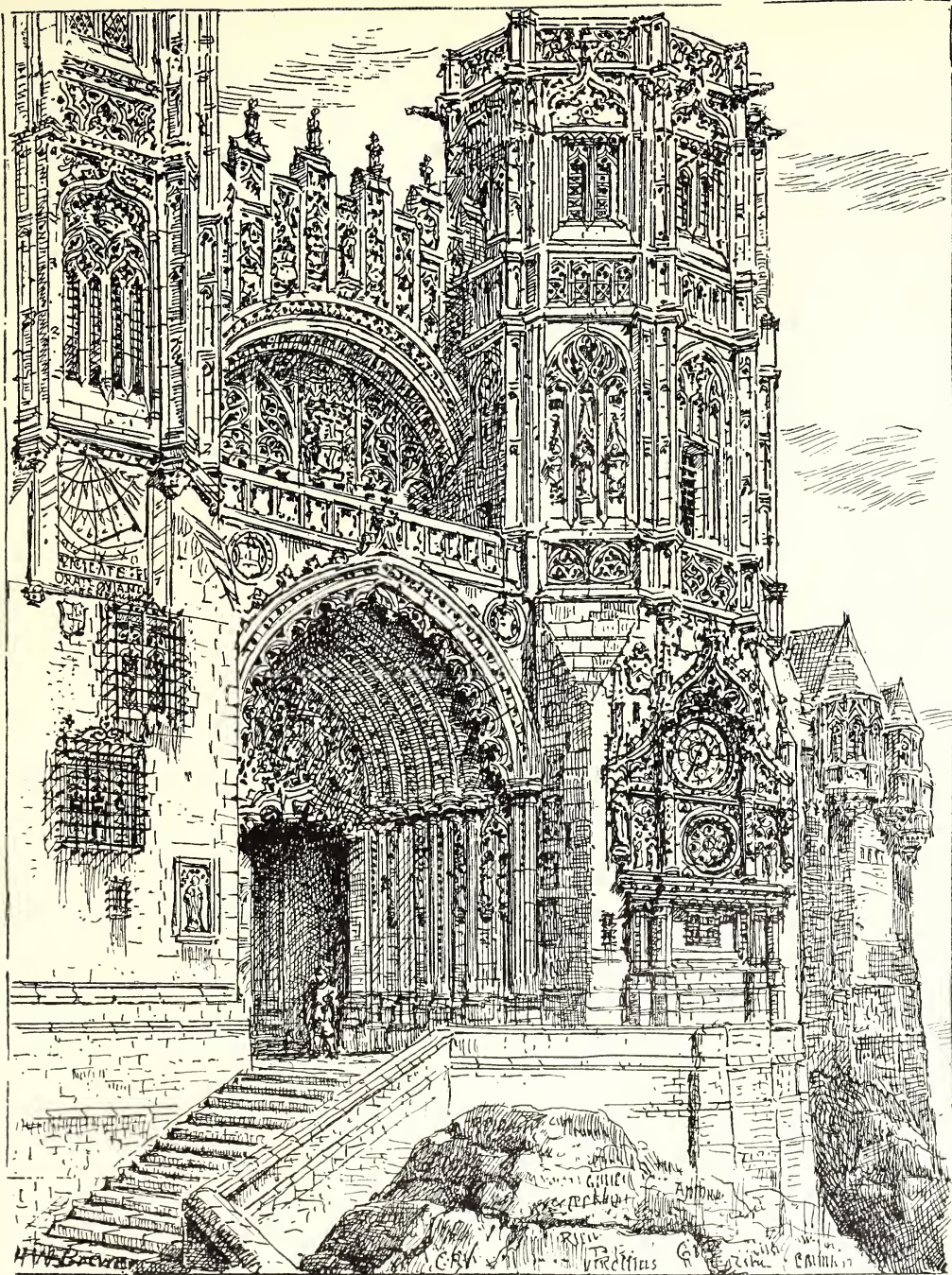








WILL. & MEND.





THE TRIUMPH OF RUTH

I

RUTH stood at her door and drank of the morning air. The scene before her was as simple as picturesque. There was a huddle of houses pathetically weather-stained and humble; an old church a little aloof; farm-lands which spread to the edges of the single street, and told more particularly the business of the homesteads dotted here and there in frames of trees, ricks, and tapering hedges. An undulating country it was, which offered either shelter in its lowlands, or wildness amid the upward sweeps of heather; which drew the eyes to the mysteries of distance, or laid gifts as rich at one's feet.

The distant view held Ruth, and so surely, that she started at the creak of the hidden gate which stood between the garden and the road. The postman came round an angle of the house.

"This be for you, ma'am?"

She took the letter and read the address:

"Miss Ruth Laughton."

The man looked at her knowingly, with an eye for the colour which had come to her cheeks.

"Yes, it's for me," she answered quietly.

"There was one before, but bein' a different name"—

"It's my maiden name," she explained, interrupting him.

"Quite so, ma'am." His reign had not been long, and he went away chuckling over the luck of his experience.

For a moment Ruth hesitated to open the letter. Her heart was in torment. She had recognised the handwriting on the instant, and now was beset once more by the ageless longing from which she was never wholly freed. For it was Reuben Dale who

had written—the lover of the girlhood which now she scarcely remembered, except as the time of his coming, and, in the end, of his going. He had declared that he must make his fortune abroad, if anywhere; that he was compelled to leave her at whatever cost. And she had listened in a subtle dread, which a year later had been justified by his intimation that he could no longer ask her “to wait for him.” Ask her to wait! How little he had known! That letter had spurred her to the most violent rebellion against both fate and the stricken self—a rebellion which had ended in disaster, and prepared the way, so she had dared to tell herself, for the reception of the later news of the lover, shocking yet creative of hope. She thought of the letter now, and on an impulse tore open the one in her hand.

There were footsteps in the house, and, turning quickly, she encountered her mother.

“A letter, Ruth?”

“Yes; from Reuben,” was the answer, strangely still, and as strangely indicative of deep emotion.

Mrs. Laughton started, and laid a hand on her daughter’s arm.

“From Reuben?” she asked. “Where is he? What does he say?”

“He’s coming to see me to-morrow.”

“Coming here!” The alarm in her voice contrasted sharply with the even tones of the younger woman.

“If I let him!”

“You cannot!”

“I must!” Ruth told her steadily. The declaration was too revolutionary in spirit to be dealt with easily, and in silence Mrs. Laughton led the way into the garden—a sweet old place with box bordered paths, where audacious hollyhocks and queenly roses rose from beds cut in velvety grass, where mignonette and wall-flowers, asters and jonquils, sweet-briar and clematis, willow, yew, and laurel, scented and shadowed both house and grounds, and wrapped the luscious veil of a wealthy midsummer around all who should stray there.

Bending over a rose-bush, Ruth asked:

“Have I hurt you, mother?”

“Not if you have not hurt yourself, my child.”

“You think I could be hurt so easily?”

"Not easily. I know," she allowed, "there is that in your recollection of Reuben which it is hard to take away."

"Why should it be taken away?"

"I'm thinking of him!"

"So am I."

"Remember what we heard of him!" Mrs. Laughton warned. But the pious exhortation evoked a joyous response.

"Mother, it was blessed news!" Then she added, a note of fine wonderment coming into her voice: "Was it not strange we should be told of his disgrace? Ten years of silence; then the news; and now—this!" Her fingers tightened on the letter.

"Remember, it was a disgrace!"

"Yes, a sin—a great sin!"

The mother was taken aback. Was sympathy displayed, or dismay? It seemed more nearly a regret which struggled with a satisfaction; a pity overwhelmed with a fearful joy; the cry of a victor too generous to forget the victim's loss.

They were in the part of the garden which stood highest, and instinctively they made for the arbour there—a sheltered nook whence a wide sweep of country could be seen. The sun was drawing away the last veil of mist: a few minutes later the earth would lie quite bare to its majestic blaze; the busied drone of insects was on the air. With the two women it was an hour which strove after quietude, and failed through excess of offerings: the earth pleaded to give peace; their hearts were astir through their foreseeings.

"Can you imagine you could be happy with him?" Mrs. Laughton asked.

"That would come later."

"Later?" She turned in quick surprise.

"If at all."

Again it was the calmness of the utterance which gave poignancy to the answer, to the renewal of the mother's bewilderment, and to her determination to wait in silence for the explanation that must be made.

"Mother, is it wrong of me to call myself Mrs. Newby?" Ruth asked.

"I think you suffered enough without"—

But she was interrupted.

"The world knows me as Mrs. Newby, but I am William Newby's wife only in the sight of God!" Passion showed at last—the passion which made more acceptable the defence, indicating the stress that had been as well as the stress that was. But the question that quickly followed was spoken in a softer voice. "Mother, I may always count on your love?"

"Of course, my child."

"Whatever may happen?"

"Even so, Ruth."

"You will believe I am acting for the best so far as I can see?"

"I shall."

"Because I am pure-hearted, although in my agony I let myself go astray; because I dare not forbid Reuben Dale to come?"

But on hearing that last appeal Mrs. Laughton was struck with a racking doubt.

"You will tell him?" she asked, as much in beseechment as in inquiry.

"Why should I?—Why should I? I was wicked, but I was wronged; Reuben has been wicked too—a sort of thief! Let us be silent and forget!"

"Forget!"

"Let the sins balance one another!"

"Will they?" Doubt was frankly expressed: even at that moment she did not wholly distrust the novel proposal. For she knew that Ruth had always loved Reuben, and she knew that William Newby had been the chief offender. And notwithstanding her chastity, there was a sanctity about the first true love which to her feeling could make the union of the couple acceptable. Nor did she suspect that Ruth's plea to set off her sin against her lover's was the product of sophistry: surely, in his case and in hers, one who had done so much wrong would be the more ready to forgive!

"Really balance, you mean?" Ruth asked.

"Yes."

"No, they won't!" The confession was bitterly incisive, hard, angry.

But the mother had her power.

"Ruth," she pleaded, "trust me."

And the response came at once.

"I must be his, mother! If he wants me, I must be his!" She sprang to her feet, throwing out her arms in piteous entreaty.

"But if you were to marry him without telling him your secret, and afterwards he discovered it"—

"It would test his love."

"It might ruin you both."

"We are ruined now."

"God can forgive."

"Man never forgets."

The two thoughts met with a repellent clash, and Mrs. Laughton shrank under the din. Her soul craved peace for the child she had given to the world—the child who would ever bring back the days of her own wifehood, and form the solid link between herself and the life around her. But the gold of her experience was interwoven with steel, and she could play a difficult part. Ruth would never know herself, if she did not then; Reuben would not have asked for her unless love had prompted him. But she must make plain the issue.

"You accept the risk?" was her question.

"The risk! Mother, William Newby would have married me, but my madness had gone, and I knew I did not love him—that was my risk!"

"I think of Reuben too," Mrs. Laughton urged.

"He shall never know. This very night we will go away—far away where no word can follow. He loves me: he comes to me in his hour of need. Let the gossips drag me through the mire—if he does not know!"

"You forget, he might forgive you."

"I could not let him! Oh, don't you understand?—I want to be better than he; he must think I am better! It is that which will give me strength—the pride I need!"

And Mrs. Laughton, understanding, was silent.

II

In the tenth year of his married life Reuben Dale lay on his deathbed. He breathed with difficulty, and to call the attention of his wife stretched out a feeble arm. Tenderly she bent to him.

"Yes, dear?"

"I have kept something from you."

She winced under his words, but her hands caressed him fondly.

"You had a good reason—why not?" she answered.

Reuben stirred in evident pain.

"I was once a swindler!" he gasped.

She read his look as evidence that he asked for an assurance of her forgiveness—the forgiveness which, to her punishing, she could not feel to be necessary.

"Don't trouble yourself, dear: it is nothing; you've long since made amends." Conscious of the poverty of her words, she did not wonder that he still looked at her anxiously, pleadingly, wonderingly. But she was afraid, as always when reference was made to the far-away days of her loneliness. And the fear kept her silent, lest in her longing to soothe the dying lover she should be overwrought and confess herself as great a sinner as he, to the losing of the place which she needed more than all others, which not even love could give.

So there was a pause, during which Mrs. Laughton crept into the room, her shadowed form and noiseless steps adding to the sense of stillness.

"In my drawer there are papers—fetch them."

The wife was stung.

"No need, dearest," she begged,—“no need at all. I must always love you whatever has happened!”

"Fetch them!" His tone was decisive, but he retained hold of her hand, and searched her face with frantic eagerness.

"What is it?" she asked breathlessly.

There was no answer but the sigh of a last hope gone, the while he released her.

"Dearest!" she whispered, and kissed him again and again.

"The papers!" he demanded.

Shaken, bewildered, she left the room, and Mrs. Laughton went to the bedside.

Reuben's exhausted frame was rapidly sinking to its rest, but he had strength to sign to his companion that he wanted to speak. She stooped until her ear almost touched his lips.

"Newby—he told me—all!"

"Newby told you!" The words cracked upon her withered, helpless lips.

"Before—we—married—don't—tell her."

Then he slumbered into death.

The two women looked at the rigid form. They had let the moonlight enter and fall on the peaceful face of the dead beloved now so far beyond their influence. Many minutes they stood there in silence, but at last their human need broke the spell.

"The end may be blessed!" the elder woman muttered.

"Mother, he thought me good!" The cry was hushed, but it was compact of an awesome triumph. She had won: the world's decree had been set at naught; the poison had been warded from the cherished love; Reuben Dale had always believed her better than himself.

"He thought me good!" she cried again.

"He must have," Mrs. Laughton answered, in her greater knowledge.

Arthur H. Holmes.

*The Plate facing this page is after a Charcoal Drawing
by FRANK MURA.*



SENSATIONS

I

A WARM afternoon in a green world, the heart of the apple country. A lush rich carpet of green below, and above, the blue vault, seen through a fretted ceiling of flaked blossom and green bough. And set in the midst of the glow, a slight figure of a young woman, Alison Dyer, dressed in delicate grey. The slanting sun rays fell where they could through the branches and touched her hair to gold. The pale of her cheeks would have seemed dim in all that brilliance, but a happy inward light suffused them. She stood motionless, her senses passive to impressions. From across the hedge came a breath and glimmer of blue-bells; behind, in the orchard, the homely chatter of pigs and geese dissipated the leaning to melancholy. It was one of the elemental moments, so crowded with joy that Life springs forward to welcome Death. Such at least was Alison's sensation. She had come out as usual at that hour of the afternoon to wait for the postman by a gap in the hedge, so as to save him the extra quarter of a mile round to the front of the house.

There had been other golden afternoons, a whole week of them, but this one somehow singled itself out. The child of Earth felt her kinship with the mighty Mother; she longed, achingly, to be taken back to the womb from whence she came. Then, like the poet, she turned "to share the rapture," and there was no one. The incommunicable thrill remained her own secret.

The postman, in holland blouse and red-striped trouser, arrived with his burden—

"Three letters for you, Miss Alison! How's the mistress to-day?"

"Better, thank you," was the reply, mechanically given.

The kind-faced, elderly man, with his look as of ripe wisdom drawn from native soil, still seemed part of the story she had been telling herself. She was a teller of stories by profession, and the postman's figure, framed in the gap of the hedge, easily wove itself into the web of her imaginings. But the letters looked too commonplace to be read in the open ; she reserved them for the inmates of the house, whose affection for her would, she knew, transmute the common things. "The mistress," her mother, a clergyman's widow, was afflicted with one of those mysterious maladies which, gracefully accepted, only add to the charm of a certain kind of charming woman. To her, sofa-ridden, and arrayed in becoming black-and-white draperies and laces, and to the younger sister Frances, who sat at her feet with a book, entered Alison.

"Any news, darling?" asked the invalid, in a tone of vibrating sympathy.

"I've saved whatever there is for you," said Alison, bending down to touch her mother's forehead with her lips.

"Oh, look! she hasn't opened them," exclaimed Frances ; "fancy! the incurious woman!" Frances, a trim, neat, prettyish girl, stretched out her hand eagerly for the letters.

"It was too beautiful," said Alison. These three had one heart, but the brain of the family was Alison's. She partly supported them by her gift in literature, which was of an order delicate and tender, but genuine. Generations back she would have been accounted a rarity among women, or perhaps might never have found herself out. Now she was fortunate that her flute-like notes were heard and cherished by a select few even through the huge blare of the orchestra of lettered persons. She had an eye for the human and humorous, and a gentle rallying touch for the quaintnesses of the country-side that was her home. Neighbours generally reputed her clever, and believed her to "write books." A few recognised and enjoyed themselves in her portraits, but the popular votes were given to the other two, both so "nice," while Alison was "so reserved." Nevertheless, an eligible squire, long the despair of the matrimonial projectors of the county, had the strange taste to desire Alison, rather than Frances, for his wife. But Alison was firm, to the sorrow of her mother and sister ; they

both subscribed to the universal verdict in praise of Tom Wingfield, as a man of honour and worth. And that he should love Alison proved him to know the value of rarity, though in other respects his tastes seemed without distinction.

"You didn't wish me to read *this*?" said Frances.

"What is it?"

"From—Tom!" said the young girl, blushing.

"Oh—again!" breathed Alison.

"He loves you, dear!" said the mother wistfully, and Frances looked the urgings she had ceased to express in words.

Alison knelt down by the sofa.

"I know what you and Frances wish, mother darling," she murmured. "But try not to wish, won't you? It's not enough"—

"No, darling, we don't wish anything unless you wish it. Your happiness is ours."

"Now, this is *really* interesting," said Frances, opening another letter. "From Mrs. Bodley!" (she named a distinguished lady novelist)—"admires your work—wishes to make your acquaintance—would appoint a day whenever you should be in town, etc. etc." She read aloud with glee the flattering expressions of the great lady.

II

A few weeks later Alison found herself at a crush at Mrs. Bodley's. She had met the great lady already in private, and received much sympathy and encouragement about her work. To-day she had been promised the pleasure of making other valuable connections among the set who were already devoted, so Mrs. Bodley said, to the manifestations of her talent. But the goodwill of the hostess was a stronger point than her social tact. Absorbed in fervid discussion with other aspirants to fame, she rather forgot her young friend—and Alison was left, not unwillingly, pretty much alone in the crowd. She wandered about, glancing at the pictures, singling out what seemed notabilities for inward comment, contentedly amused. London was always interesting, and the milieu was fresh. She was on an annual visit to cousins, kindred with whom the tie was only of blood, and whose thoughts

were far removed from hers. Here at Mrs. Bodley's she was welcomed for the first time as a comrade in the brotherhood of letters; the occasion was thrilling. But, as the afternoon wore on, the stifling heat and exhausted air began to tell on the country maiden; she longed to be away in the clear, unpretentious fields, as her quick ear caught scraps of dialogue, reeking of folly, not the wisdom she was fain for. She stole to a window, and there suddenly a vision met her. The large double drawing-room was lighted at both ends. Here at the back it looked out on a London garden, a patch of brown gravel, in the midst of which a solitary fruit-tree, now in full bloom, gallantly arose, a protest of Nature against its environment. The branches tapped the window, of which a crack was open, and there was breathing-space for one. Sunshine gleamed on the blossoms; there was the blue above, and the crowd behind resolved itself into the chatter of pigs and geese, rather more than less inhuman. The scene so like, and yet so unlike, carried Alison back in a moment to the home orchard, and the memory of one special afternoon flashing into her mind brought the same happy light into her face, the same impulse to look round for the fellow-being whose sensations would be attune. Someone was by her side before she knew the impulse had been obeyed. He murmured, "No one but you and I saw that."

It was a young man she had already noted for his sensitive face and soft brown eyes and hair. She had seen him from afar, leaning against a wall, like herself apparently an observer, probably an artist of some kind. Her glance had met his as she looked round in unconscious search for sympathy. His few words were the resolution to a haunting discord. They stood looking together at the outside things, while one thought "He sees," and the other "She looks"; and then each turned to each to see the other's thought in the other's face, and there each saw a mirrored self.

Then Alison spoke: "I was all alone here," she began, "just as"—

But he took her up eagerly: "I saw that too—but remember, there is always someone"—

"Not always! A few days ago"—and she described the scene in the orchard, choosing the aptest, most poetic words, wrought to a pitch, for as a talker she was often deficient.

"I guessed you from afar! That was what puzzled me," said he. "I guessed, because I know everyone here." (He glanced round.) "You were imported, a foreigner, and yet you saw. I was watching you, trying to make it out. You know the elect are for the most part only to be found in the great cities."

"And the pear-trees?" said Alison, turning again to the window.

"A case in point," he answered quickly. "How much nobler than your orchard! Yours belong to the pampered and privileged. This fellow stands and reigns of his own merit."

"Like our inglorious Miltons."

"I beg your pardon, not 'mute.'"

"Nor we! when you know the language"—

"You must teach it me!"

"Does not our native tongue suffice?"

"Ours! yes, we both speak it."

Alison laughed out merrily; he said: "We have not been introduced."

"But, yes! by our Mother."

"She only indicated the kinship."

"In a way of her own!"

"Do you know this balcony?" He pushed the French window a little farther open.

"I am here for the first time," said she.

"Come, and I will show you better things." He led her outside, and showed where bits of noble architecture could be seen, for the house was so disposed cornerwise as to be a vantage ground for views, and this by chance, not design, of the builder.

"But all the best things come by chance," he remarked: "the best effects—sensations—'It Happens' is your only Artist."

"The Artist who contrived our meeting," said Alison simply.

"Our *first* meeting," he corrected; "I was about to say, when shall I see you again? But you have struck the right note. I don't ask to call. If we met according to the forms it would spoil everything. I don't know your name—you don't know mine"—

A voice behind, a lady's, cried "Mr. Carnegie."

"Betrayed!" muttered Alison's companion:—"I must go! Are you in town long?"

"A week longer"—

"Much may 'happen' in a week."

"I expect *very* much—happiness."

"But we agree to leave something to—Chance?"

"Certainly," said Alison, smiling up at him.

"You see, I can guess your haunts," said he, smiling back.

She held out her hand, "Good-bye."

"*Au revoir*," said he, touching her fingers gently; pressure would have been less eloquent.

The next morning, whether by chance or not, they met. It was in a picture-gallery to which Alison had come alone, for the pictures were of a style untempting to the general, *i.e.* to her aunts and cousins. Edmund Carnegie was presently at her side.

"You see!" he said. And he took possession of her, like an old friend. They spent the morning together, and parted with the same affectation that the next meeting would be fortuitous, but with a knowledge derived from skilful hints as to how it might be brought about. And so, day after day, "it happened" again. Morning, afternoon, or evening, sometimes twice in the day, the meeting took place. Once together they wandered wherever fancy led, choosing always some sight that must be seen, that Alison must be shown, or that she must show, for as a stranger she had her own intimate acquaintance with the beauties of the town. The sight was of course a pretext for talk, and the talk was endless. They learnt of each other's lives and habits, and dwelling-places; eventually she told her name.

"Call me Edmund," begged Carnegie; "and let me call you—what name did they give you?"

"Alison!"

"Beautiful! Don't tell me the rest. Let it be a mystery for the present. There are so few left. Let us live in one if we can—for a few days."

So for a few days they lived, Alison in a dream, Carnegie in the enjoyment of sensations to whose search he devoted his life. Alison sometimes wondered whether she were doing right; as a guest, she was left to find her own enjoyment, such being the theory of hospitality among her London relatives. But she admitted she had to conceal or even occasionally to fabricate to her hosts. Carnegie silenced her scruples.

"You are *living*," he said. "You couldn't explain that to your aunt. Explanation would be Death."

"I wish I could explain to *you*!"

"I understand! Never forget. We see alike."

The last day came. Carnegie by this time knew all about Alison, her family name and profession, her village life and surroundings, and she had learnt whatever he chose to tell of himself. He was an architect of some repute, his social standing whatever he cared to make it, as he frankly told her with the candour that was part of his charm. He was "in" everything essential, or if not, it was because he could not spare the time.

"And then, it is a change sometimes to be 'outside,' as we are now, together!"

They were sitting in a sheltered corner of a small public garden, one of those green "bits" that have been rescued for street-worn humanity by pious citizens. Edmund said the place was known only to himself and a few of the elect. Alison remarked:

"This too I owe to you."

"I brought you here, but it is your creation. Henceforth there will be you in it for me," he replied.

"I want to tell you something," said Alison; "I want you to understand."

"Ah, no! I *don't* want," he frowned.

"Yes, please," she said gently. "There has been something—peculiar—not quite usual. You liked it, I know, and I—allowed it. I want to tell you why." She spoke steadily, hesitating for choice of words, but without embarrassment.

"Yes?" said Carnegie sympathetically. He was just a little alarmed, guessing that a crisis was at hand, which, as an old campaigner, he was prepared to avert.

He had not often let himself drift so near the points marked Danger in his mental map of the Conduct of Life.

"My—our friendship—has been—will be an epoch for me," Alison continued.

"You flatter me."

"I said for *me*," said Alison, detecting his flippancy. "You see what my life has been. It is natural that—living so—out of the world—there should never have been—I never met anyone

before who *saw* things, as you say, in the same way. It makes everything different."

"You have been lonely?" said Carnegie. He saw the risk involved in such a question, but he let himself go recklessly, and even dared to look softly into her eyes.

"Yes," she answered simply. "And then—as an artist—I care most about that—there are so few opportunities—there have been—I mean for me—of seeing—experiencing. I have always determined not to go to seek, but to take what came, and make what I could of that. And then *you* came—and so I accepted *that*—just as it was. Do you see? That is why I have let everything be as you wished. You have done so much for me, and I have taken it all—all that I could—greedily, like a poor hungry man who knows not when he shall feed again. Do you see?"

"Yes, I see," said Carnegie. He was relieved, and yet half disappointed. For almost the first time in their intercourse he did not really quite "see." He listened for something further, as she got up, and they stood for a moment looking at each other.

"I thought you would understand that—as well," said Alison. "Thank you. It has been a great pleasure. Good-bye."

She held out her hand.

"Oh! is that all?" exclaimed Carnegie, hardly knowing what he said.

Alison looked wonderingly. "Good-bye," she said again, and in a flash she had disappeared into a passing tramcar.

"Edmund, my boy," said Carnegie to himself, "you're a fool!"

III

It was one of Carnegie's favourite dogmas that the only hope of a real Renaissance of Architecture lay in the reverent attention to genuinely native styles. Accordingly he announced one summer to his friends that he intended to spend his autumn vacation in the exploration of churches in Orchardshire, a district peculiarly rich in varied beauties of building. He should go alone, and he should walk, for he scorned the bondage of the intolerable bicycle. Late on a certain afternoon he was approaching a village where he

thought it probable he might spend the night. The church, of golden-grey stone, loomed in sight ; it was towered, of that mingled style, or want of style, battered here, pieced together there, such as delights the lover of rural England. Seen against the western sky, flooded now with yellow, the unpretentious pile was majestic. Edmund climbed the stone steps that served as a sort of stile-entrance to the churchyard, and took out his sketch-book. From his seat he looked across the tower-front to another entrance from a sloping field by a wicket-gate, through which he was presently aware of two figures passing, a young man and a girl, both in black, or so at least it seemed as they were silhouetted against the sun. They both carried flowers and advanced together towards a grave. Carnegie scrambled down from his perch, lest he should be seen and appear to obtrude himself upon their movements, and wandered towards the porch. Having given them, as he thought, opportunity to dispose of their offerings, he returned in time to see the man raise his hat and depart by the stile-entrance, while the girl went back the same way as she had come. Something, more than ordinary curiosity, seemed to draw Edmund's steps towards the grave. It was freshly turfed ; at its head was a simple white stone ; he read the inscription—

“ In loving memory
of

ALISON DYER,
Died June 16th 18—

This stone was erected by one who loved her.”

He had known that that would be the name he should find. He remembered to have heard of a sister, and recalled now the half-recognition of a likeness, as the young girl had moved across the grass. He had said to himself, “It is she,” meaning she whose home he knew to be not far off. Then, seeing his mistake, he had chidden himself for seeming to have her image in his mind. An ancient apple-tree that had strayed from a neighbouring orchard stood hard by the grave ; a branch laden with red and yellow fruit drooped over the stone. All around was thick green grass. The other headstones were lichen-covered, buried and hidden. It seemed as if Alison had her resting-place to herself.

"It is perfect," murmured Carnegie; "*She* would have felt it so."

True to his principle of letting events take their course, he had never attempted to communicate with Alison.

"If Chance would have us meet, why, Chance will do it, without my stir," he had said to himself. But he wondered now, as he had wondered sometimes before, whether, if they had met—well, whether the meeting would have been rapturous on one side or the other? On his? he thought not. Pleasant? Yes! He wished to see her again, to satisfy his curiosity, to see whether the impression of her would be the same in the country as it had been in the town.

What exactly the impression had been he could not quite define. The nearest word that satisfied his thought about her was that she was "rare." Then he wanted to renew another impression, the impression that she had frankly told him he had made upon her. But had she been quite frank? That was the puzzle. Sometimes he thought yes, sometimes no.

"Now," he thought, "I shall never know. 'One who loved her?' One whom she"—

He recalled the image of the young man who had been before him at the grave, and smiled as he disposed of the unspoken question.

"No—she was rare, she looked for rarity. We were alike in that," thought Edmund, and he shivered slightly as the chill of evening fell.

Fanny Johnson.

A SUNDERING

(“*During absence from TRISTAN UND ISOLDE*”)

A MILE off, on the Breton sea,
Sir Tristram's fatal sails are set :
Salt, savage winds blow huge and free.

.
Tristram and wild Yseult have met.
And you, you watch them desperately
With your soul's eyes—and me forget.

Frank Freeman.

FROM "LA VIDA ES SUEÑO" OF
CALDERON

WE live, while we see the sun,
Where life and dreams are as one;
And living has taught me this,
Man dreams the life that is his,
Until his living is done.
The king dreams he is king, and he lives
In the deceit of a king,
Commanding and governing;
And all the praise he receives
Is written in wind, and leaves
A little dust on the way,
When death ends all with a breath.
Where then is the gain of a throne,
That shall perish and not be known
In the other dream that is death?
Dreams the rich man of riches and fears,
The fears that his riches breed;
The poor man dreams of his need,
And all his sorrows and tears:
Dreams he that prospers with years,
Dreams he that feigns and forgoes,
Dreams he that rails on his foes,
And in all the world, I see,
Man dreams whatever he be,
And his own dream no man knows.

And I too dream, and behold,
 I dream I am bound with chains,
 And I dreamed that these present pains
 Were fortunate ways of old.
 What is life? a tale that is told;
 What is life? a frenzy extreme,
 A shadow of things that seem;
 And the greatest good is but small,
 That all life is a dream to all,
 And that dreams themselves are a dream.

Arthur Symons.

PORTRAIT, SAID TO BE THAT OF TIMOTEO VITI

Variously ascribed to TIMOTEO VITI, RAPHAEL, or SODOMA

“ ‘Pastel,’ *i.e.* a mixture of black chalk and coloured crayons,
“ touched with distemper wash. From the Antaldi, Lawrence,
“ and Woodburn collections.

“ Very fine and celebrated work : one of the earliest examples of
“ the method known as ‘pastel,’ or a combination of black
“ and coloured chalks. It was seen the year 1673 in
“ possession of the heirs of Timoteo Viti at Pesaro by
“ Domenico Maria Corsi, and by him described as the
“ portrait in pastels of that painter by himself (see *Archivio*
“ *Storico dell’ Arte*, vol. iv. p. 427). Afterwards, when the
“ collection of the same heirs (the Antaldi family) came to
“ England, the drawing was re-christened by the dealer
“ Woodburn as the portrait of Timoteo by Raphael, and as
“ such was acquired for the Museum at the Woodburn sale.
“ A slight chalk sketch by the hand of Timoteo, formerly
“ also in the Antaldi collection, and now in that of the heirs
“ of Sir Thomas Phillips at Leamington, repeats the likeness
“ of the same sitter in the same dress and pose, and is so far
“ a confirmation of the old title and attribution of the work :
“ though it can hardly be said to be marked by any of the
“ specific characters of Timoteo’s ordinary style.”

From Mr. Sidney Colvin’s “Notes on the Drawings and Engravings exhibited in the Print and Drawing Gallery of the British Museum, 1895–1898.”



HAUNTED NIGHT

FROM the grey sky slow fades the pallid light ;
Here in the high-walled road the shadows spread
Wider and deeper, and a nameless dread
Over the houses hangs half-hid from sight
By tall phantasmal trees ; with bristling fright
The dark leaves shiver and sigh ; all sounds are dead
That cheered the day, and with low-drooping head
Trailing slow feet the labourer beathes "Good-night."

Black night and ancient silence reign, and hark !
With rhythm of swaying limbs, what reed-blown notes,
What fall of pattering feet on hidden lawns ?
Pan piping leads the rout of dancing fauns ;
From menacing boughs and shuddering leafage floats
The aboriginal horror of the dark.

Charles Camp Tarelli.

A LONDON LETTER

MY DEAR HARROWDALE,—Your letter reached me nearly two minutes ago, so I have had more than enough time to read it through thrice. I suppose it's quite in the natural order that you've dropped from the eight closely written pages you used to send me when you first went out, to a dozen sprawling lines on one side of half a sheet. You needn't explain—especially when you explain so badly. That “things persistently refuse to happen within a hundred miles” of you should rather be a stimulus to many inventions. Certainly it would have been in the old days. You call it Climate, and I suppose I must shake the juster word that's on my pen's point back into the ink-pot.

To speak the truth, the only thing that certifies this scrap of paper as a letter from you is the evergreen beauty of your impudence. You say that if you don't make me spend time reading your long letters, I ought to have any amount of it to write you, “say once a month or so, all about everything and everybody.” I'm not the Recording Angel or Mr. W. T. Stead ; and I detect the nastiness of your insinuation that I'd rather write my own stuff than read yours. But here goes.

No doubt you know already all about the Peace Congress, and the Philippines, and Dreyfus, and the Uitlanders, and the partition of China, and Lord Rosebery's speech. I don't ; and though I admit that this qualifies me pre-eminently to write about them, I'll leave them alone in favour of things that are more amusing to both of us.

Except Yeats' two volumes of poems, I haven't come across any very amazing new books since I wrote last. It has been a second-rate time, more interesting for talk about books than for books themselves. We've had quite a good controversy about

the publication of the Brownings' love-letters, which hurt some people as almost an indecency. What do you think? If your own letters to Helen—it's Helen still, I suppose?—are like your last half-dozen to me, I imagine you will not get excited at the risk of their appearance as a posthumous work. The Bodley Head or Unicorn of nineteen hundred and fifty will have to lavish on them even thicker paper and wider margins than they did on poor Wembley's poems. But for myself, I can't feel quite indifferent. Several charming girls cherish letters of mine (or at least I posted them) that I don't want to see printed unless I can do the Introduction and marginal notes and a little judicious editing. But, speaking generally, one can't lay down a hard rule. It all depends what lovers and love-letters are involved, and the same with any other kind of letters. Some men habitually write with a prudent eye on an admiring posterity. You know poor Wembley, for instance—I've quite a bagful of his letters, that look up at me plaintively whenever I would burn them, with all the commas and colons beautifully put in, and a sufficiency of colloquialisms and broken sentences ordered with exquisite art. They are painstaking studies in the unpremeditated; and though I'm certain poor W. has kept copies, I haven't the heart to tear them up and perhaps cheat his shade of its chortle thirty years hence, when the papers shall fall to his Life and Letters, "published this day." I don't think for a moment that the Brownings didn't write first and foremost for each other. But Robert was desperately set on being counted among the Immortals. Didn't he say, "Here, Robert Browning, you writer of plays"? (By the way, Mr. John Davidson set forth at large not long ago an imaginary conversation between John Davidson and John Smith! It's quite a good working test of the size of a person to hear him pronounce his own name in this way. Browning could almost carry it off.) As for Elizabeth Barrett, she held that to reach a certain point of greatness involved making the public free in due time of one's private life. The *Sonnets from the Portuguese* were for her lover first and for the whole world very soon afterwards. It appears that Browning told his son to do as he thought fit with the letters, and I really can't see that any indelicacy has been committed. Don't take me to mean that these famous lovers wrote love-letters for ultimate publication. They didn't. But

they so wrote that if the Public ever read, it would only find what it could somehow share.—That's where my letters to Maude, Dora, and Katharine are supreme achievements to Katharine, Dora, and Maude, though I admit they would be reproachable as literature at a guinea the two volumes. I can't very easily borrow them, or you would agree with me. But, dropping all nonsense, you should get these Browning letters.

Another little literary storm has just been raging, with the *Daily Chronicle* for the tea-cup. You know how absurdly slow I am to change my papers, and somehow I still go on getting the *Chronicle* from mere force of habit. I still glance every day at the literary page, which forms a comprehensive guide to the admirable publications of Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, and gives reviews of books from some of the other publishers as well. I don't often find anything worth my pains, but the other day I came across Dr. Conan Doyle going, in large type, for "plural reviewing." You must know that the notion, born in the good days of the paper, still lingers that the *Chronicle* is the one fair and fearless literary organ, and whenever an author or publisher is hot against Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son or Sir Walter Besant, it's the *Chronicle* that gets his copy. Dr. Doyle singled out as an illustration, if not for attack, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, who was said to be directing public opinion over half a dozen different pseudonyms. Dr. Nicoll had plenty to answer for before. He has vaunted himself insistently as the "discoverer" of several fine artists who fondly imagined they were out in the light already, and of many industrious and tiresome scribblers who had better been left in obscurity, and are fast returning thither. Worst of all, it was he who let us in for the Kailyarders, and uncounted books of Idylls with glossaries at the end. But we have his own word for it that this latest sin is not to be laid to his charge. For a day or two there were threats of judges and juries; though, as there has been an uneasy feeling about it all for a long time, I should have thought Dr. Nicoll ought to have been grateful to Dr. Doyle for an opportunity of giving the lie to persistent rumours. The more general outcome seems to be a feeling in favour of "one reviewer, one review," and as a principle that's quite right. The trouble is that too many papers review books. (I hear that all sorts of unheard-of sheets wrote for review copies

of the *Times* people's *Encyclopædia Britannica*!) Now there's no more an unlimited supply of good reviewers in the country than of good poets, essayists, and philosophers, so that much of the reviewing must either be done by second-rate people (as, alas! most of it is), or the same critic must sometimes notice a book in two or three places. And again, poor old Swanney tells me that, though he takes nearly as much trouble reading another man's book as in writing one of his own, his reviews are so poorly paid for by his editor that if he didn't duplicate or paraphrase them elsewhere he'd have to chuck up the whole job. But if the number of reviews can be put down, and the status of reviewers can be put up, "One reviewer, one review!" will be a very good war-cry.

But this month it's been music and drama and pictures much more than books. The second week in May the Irish Literary Theatre pulled off a great success in Dublin on the lines of the articles in the March and April *Dome* which I sent you. (By the way, I don't think your joke is so very superb when you say you choke off all the bores within fifty miles by lending them a *Dome*, and telling them you look forward to a chat next time over the articles.) I couldn't go to Dublin myself, as it clashed with the London Musical Festival and the opening of the Opera. The hero of the Festival was to have been Perosi, but his oratorios have been sung and the Thames is not on fire. From all accounts he is a sincere and fine-spirited young man, and if he will only write some great music instead of the poor stuff he is now publishing, I see no reason why he should not some day be a great composer. Lamoureux has taken half the work of the Festival, and Wood has taken much more than half the honours. There were a few concerts by the combined orchestras, which pleased the public tremendously. Think of the brass doubled in the prelude to the third act of *Lohengrin*! Indeed, it's quite funny to recall how we used to be told that Wagner excerpts in the concert-room gave no idea of the effects produced by the same passages in the opera-house and with their proper context. It's still true in a sense, of course, but it wasn't altogether the fault of Muck (who's conducting most of the Wagner at Covent Garden this year) that the Ride of the Valkyries seemed weak and unsatisfying, when one's ears still tingled with the noise that Wood's and Lamoureux's two hundred men had made with it a day or

two before. On the whole, I hope this experiment of huge orchestras will not be repeated. There's a tinge of vulgarity about it, as there is about the Handel Festival. But one feels the Handel Festival to be an enormity right through. Indeed, it does good by reminding any refined and intelligent musician who may accidentally be present, that Handel's effects can only be brought off in their bigness and dignity when the choral and instrumental forces are not so overgrown as to make the soloists either kill themselves or appear insignificant. But for the moment these combined orchestras deceive.

You want to hear about the Opera. Of course the fashion is to heave half a brick at it, but really there is a great deal to praise. To begin with, they've got one of the Covent Garden Market people (at least, so I suppose) to sell them a huge greenhouse, and they've stuck it in the upper storey of the portico. It's full of plants, and you are encouraged to smoke to kill the insects. There's an American Bar at one end, and a man can now spend a very pleasant evening at the Opera without bothering to hear the music at all. You remember I wrote and told you our fears that we were going to have Italian—very Italian—opera again, and almost no Wagner? With that sort of thing the bar would have been the only place. But we're having as much Wagner as ever, and quite well done, too. Lohengrin's swan has been refeathered, and the garden scene in *Tristan* is exquisite. It's true that on the first night of *Die Walküre* one couldn't tell if Siegmund had killed Hunding or Hunding Siegmund, or Smith Jones, or Jones Smith, and that the week after, Senta and the Dutchman appeared to prefer another place when they should have ascended to heaven; but the dawns and sunsets and thunderstorms have all been admirable. Mottl has done *Lohengrin* poorly and *Tristan* finely. There's a King Mark that won't do at all, but in the De Reszkes and Bispham and Van Rooy we have great artists, and the making of one, if it isn't too late, in Van Dyck. The women are not so good, but Frau Schumann-Heink does well, and all the German ladies are at least doing their very best. And what do you think? A lot of the critics, men who've largely helped to kill the bad old ways of opera, are down on this year's artists mainly for being stout. I admit they would be better thinner—they would admit it,

sorrowfully, themselves,—but so long as a woman sings well, and acts well, and is not so ill-looking as to make her lover's devotion seem absurd, one must remember that, after all, one can't have everything. I'd rather see pretty women than ugly ones; but all this grumbling at mere looks tends in the long run to bring back the very worst kind of *prima donna*, and all that she involves. As for the orchestra, it's the best I ever heard at Covent Garden.

We've had Mottl Concerts, and Richter Concerts, and Paderewski, and I don't know what else—all good and all enthusiastically supported. And the dome of St. Paul's is (as the *Chronicle* would say) "saved." And the *Sunday Daily Mail* and the *Sunday Daily Telegraph*, both of them influences for commonness, are dead—on the whole, I can say "It moves"!—Yours ever,

L. A. Corbeille.

P.S.—The "International Art" is on again at Knightsbridge, but I haven't time to write about it. I'm told the Academy's got the usual square miles of canvas at Burlington House, too, but I haven't yet verified the rumour.—L. A. C.

The Editor earnestly begs his contributors to write their names and addresses on their Manuscripts, even when letters or fully addressed envelopes are sent.



“THE HARNESS-MENDERS”

After a Drawing by A. HUGH FISHER

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL AT KNIGHTSBRIDGE

EVERY year the number of picture-shows in London grows apace, and with this increase is gone all the element of novelty which made the first opening of the Grosvenor Gallery seem the really important event that it was. We are now accustomed to exhibitions which proclaim revolution, and when the first fiery flush of revolt is passed, settle down into respectable Liberalism; so that the show at Knightsbridge, in spite of its imposing title and its famous President, attracts little more attention in the Art world than does the Academy.

As far as its title is concerned, *The International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers* at least promises catholicity, and if there is any meaning in the word catholic, an exhibition is catholic which hangs Claude Monet in the same room with Mr. Walter Crane and Mr. H. W. B. Davis, R.A., and Professor Legros on a screen with Felicien Rops. Then the gallery itself is spacious and airy, provided with plenty of seats, and free from pretentious efforts at decoration. The pictures are rarely more than two deep on the wall, so that they can be examined easily, and are most excellently lighted from above; while the arrangement of the screens keeps the spectator in comparative shadow. The prints and drawings are not all so well treated, but the best things among them are generally quite visible. The spectator's comfort has, in fact, been studied in an unusual degree, and there is perhaps only one more improvement which he might reasonably demand. The exhibition, as we have said, is catholic, and therefore shows the work of several different countries and periods, and of many schools of thought and

technical practice. The exhibits therefore vary so radically, that the mental readjustments in passing from one to another become rather painful even to those who are fairly intelligent and well-informed. Yet instead of trying to relieve our sufferings, the Hanging Committee have rather intensified them, by an utter absence of grouping and classification, which is the more inexplicable from the care the President has taken to keep his own work together, so that it tells as a single artistic unit.

So-called "decorative" hanging is a fad for which there may be some excuse in arranging a permanent collection of pictures, but in the chance assemblage of an annual exhibition there is too little time to do the thing properly, and unless it is done properly there is no reason why decorative hanging should be attempted at all. A rough classification, on the other hand, is a great advantage; it enables a picture to be located with tolerable certainty, and a man's work can be judged as a whole, instead of being examined as a series of detached scraps. The grouping of Mr. Whistler's paintings gives a proper importance to his slighter and more delicate work, which might not attract notice were it scattered among larger and more important canvases. This, which tells so strongly in Mr. Whistler's case, would tell equally strongly in the case of all other good artists; so that it is a matter for surprise that the Knightsbridge Committee, so alive in other matters to the convenience of the public, have not already followed the lead of their President, and hung the gallery on the panel system. This change, combined with a simple scheme of classification, would make the gallery as convenient as it is already comfortable, and comfort and convenience imply popularity, which, if not always the goal of artists, is usually the goal of Gallery Committees.

I cannot speak here of single painters or single paintings according to the current critical formula, because the exhibition seems to reflect certain definite tendencies which, though not new to painters, are still new enough to the general public to afford material for discussion and speculation. The title of the Society is International, and a glance at the catalogue will show that some of the most famous artists of France, Germany, Norway, and America are among the exhibitors. The vast bulk of the show, however, remains British, and represents British art of an

order distinct from the general tendencies of other London exhibitions, though it includes names not unknown at the Academy, the New English Art Club, and the New Gallery.

It is some years since the Glasgow School sprang into prominence, and attained on the Continent almost at once a position which at present it is far from holding in London. Nevertheless the starting of the Knightsbridge Gallery, the aid of Mr. Whistler, and the recruiting of a strong following among the younger artists of England, has enabled the school to make a definite bid for recognition, and to invite openly the criticism that such recognition implies.

The Glasgow artists have certainly chosen their time well, for, since the death of Sir Edward Burne - Jones and the increasing age of Mr. Watts robbed the New Gallery of its chief attractions, there has been no exhibition in London to which the lover of pictures could turn with the certainty of finding at least one really good thing. The policy of the New English Art Club in making a feature each year of the work of some one distinguished guest, always gave an interest to the show at the Dudley Gallery, but the interest was more for painters and art-lovers than for the public, and it is to the public that the man must appeal who wants success in this life.

This success the Knightsbridge Show has a good chance of getting. It is admirably lighted, and cool; there are plenty of chairs; there is room to stroll about and show a new frock; while the pictures are well in sight, are not too numerous, and are fresh, varied, and sometimes unusual in appearance—that is to say, make admirable material for small talk. They are mostly portraits or landscapes, and the remnant is so small that it would be unwise to draw any deductions from it as to the achievement of the Glasgow School as a whole.

The work of Mr. Whistler has won the success it deserves, has conquered the ignorance and prejudice that derided and opposed its greatest artistic triumphs, and stands as much outside contemporary criticism as does the painting of Mr. Watts. Nevertheless there is a certain significance in the fact that Mr. Whistler should be the President of the International Society. During the last quarter of a century he has been the champion of artistic freedom, of the right of the painter to select and arrange

and harmonise, to make art instead of academic or scientific treatises, and the theories which dominate the Glasgow School would seem to owe the best part of their origin to him.

Their landscapes, for instance, are based entirely upon selection; selection of a definite mood of natural colour, of a happy scheme of arrangement to which Nature can be adapted and fitted. As is only natural in a school, men's tastes and powers differ, so that the results are not always of equal interest; but as a whole the landscapes show a marked uniformity of pictorial success as compared with any similar collection of English work. It is to be regretted that Mr. Peppercorn is not exhibiting by the side of Mr. Muhrman, and that Mr. Walton, Mr. Paterson, and Mr. Hamilton lack the company of Mr. W. Y. Macgregor, for Mr. Peppercorn's skilful refinement and Mr. Macgregor's majestic efforts contain certain qualities that are not over prominent at Knightsbridge.

The colouring of the landscapes is for the most part pleasant, and errs usually from excess alone, yet it is hard to imagine most of them as part of the decoration of an ordinary house. In any but the largest of rooms the clashing of lively colours would be almost intolerable. Such a work as Mr. Paterson's brilliant and forcible *Sunlit Valley* (No. 25) cannot be conceived in relation to a scheme of domestic architecture—at least in its present frame—while the quiet pictures of Mr. Muhrman could be hung in almost any room without incongruity. Along with this colour-violence there goes a certain looseness of composition that comes from dependence upon mere velocity of handling. This would, I think, have been more noticeable than it is had any comparison been instituted with the serious design of Mr. Macgregor; but even in the latter's absence, it leaves one with the impression that the works exhibited are fresh and lively rather than important.

The general recipe of the school for swift handling gives their work a lightness that is pleasant to eyes accustomed to stodgy English ideas of finish, but is accompanied by a grave disadvantage that is more remarkable, nay disastrous, in portrait than in landscape. The general desire for easy rapidity has led to satisfaction with approximate results instead of a desire for perfection—so that the touch even of the best painters of the school is rough and shapeless. This does not matter when

pictures are viewed at a distance, but all great painters of cabinet pictures have combined excellence of effect with pleasantness of actual material, and until this combination is effected a man's work remains incomplete. A Titian, a Velasquez, or a Whistler not only looks well at a distance, but on close inspection one sees that the pigment, however broadly spread, however lightly swept, is of fine quality and consistence, as well as of a definite shape indicating summarily the matter it interprets. Mr. Guthrie gets the general effect of a head, but at close quarters the pigment is seen to be a conglomerate of shapeless dabs and splodges; so that his powerful harmonious work is clumsy compared with that of any man who is *drawing* all the time with his brush. Mr. Lavery has, in addition, a way of doing a thing so brilliantly that he drowns all sense of modelling in the search for ultra-cleverness—the skirt of his *Lady in Pink* (No. 90) is an example of this fault on an extended scale.

That these strictures are not hypercritical can, I think, be proved by comparison with some other pictures at Knightsbridge, by painters who are not among the world's few great men, and are therefore good pacemakers for artists like Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Lavery, whose race is not yet run. Look first at the head by Couture (No. 142), so simply, quickly, frankly done, yet so solid, so thoroughly drawn. Then turn to the three little pictures by Alfred Stevens (Nos. 210, 210A, and 212) in the next room, where you will find the same thorough modelling blended with a humanity and suavity of pigment which transmutes the little canvases into minor masterpieces. I say minor deliberately, because if there is a gulf between a Stevens and such a painting as Mr. Roche's harmonious *Portrait of Mrs. Grosvenor Thomas* (No. 22), the gulf between Terborch and Stevens is wider still.

Particular stress has been laid on this question of handling, because it has almost become a recipe with the school, and it is a recipe which absolutely precludes the finest forms of painting. Mr. Henry is one of the few who has tried to emancipate himself from it, and to combine freshness of effect with quality of pigment. At present he seems to be overmuch in love with contrasts between solid painting and the transparency got by excessive scraping, so that the head of his *Mr. Justice Darling* (No. 129) looks like gesso affixed to the canvas, and the brooch in *The*

Pearl Necklet (No. 61) projects far in front of the figure ; but the effort is deserving of all praise, since it shows a willingness, not obvious everywhere else, to support the ambitions of the present with the science of the past. As this combination has been responsible for every perfect work of art hitherto produced, the attaining of it is probably worth some neglect of contemporary fashion, and the time and labour devoted to deliberate experiment.

The two dangers that threaten the Glasgow School appear to be a premature contentment with the great progress it has already made, and a too ready acquiescence in the praise of certain Continental critics. Even among these latter there seems at present to be a wave of reaction, when we find one of the most kindly and wide-minded of them writing thus : “. . . In regard to their average performances it could not be concealed that they had a certain outward industrial character, and this, raised to a principle of creation, led too easily to something stereotyped . . . With their decorative pallet pictures this Scotch art approaches the border where painting ends and the Persian carpet begins.” The German critic has, in fact, touched upon the weak spots in their work to which the greater part of this article has been devoted ; their vigorous incoherence of handling, which becomes at last as monotonous as English stipple or French square brush work. Of their aiming for colour that is effective rather than harmonious I have already spoken, and it is possibly on this account that the Glasgow painters as a rule fail to convey any impression of grandeur or majesty. We may call their work brilliant, or daring, or forcible, or original, but we cannot call it great.

Nevertheless the school has not far to go in search of a remedy. The work of their President is strong precisely where they are weak, and in his pictures they can see their own theories brought to perfection. Mr. Whistler's colour harmonies are more daring and original than those of his boldest followers, and yet they are always attuned by exquisite personal taste. Mr. Whistler's handling is broader than the wildest splashing of the younger men, but with him liberty never degenerates into licence ; nothing is left to the freaks of chance, or drowned in a general incompleteness. His brush is always under strict control, and does not work until the artist's brain has decided exactly what the shape and consistency of the next stroke must be. That decision once

made, the hand executes deliberately the conception of the brain, laying firmly the one inevitable stroke which carries the work forward with the least possible show of effort. Each new subject demands a new act of invention on the painter's part, and a stroke of a new shape, colour, consistency, and quality. Thus, and only thus, comes that impression of lightness and variety which marks the work of all great artists; and the one great danger of the present day, with its elaborate system of art-teaching, is to delude the student into the belief that great pictures can be produced by a formula, without continued and strenuous exercise of the trained senses and the trained intellect. That such exercises with the greatest men should seem to be a natural form of amusement, is no excuse for their neglect by those on whom the verdict is still "Not Proven."

C. J. Holmes.

STORIES AND FABLES

"DIES IRÆ." By Cecil Hartley.

"THE STAFF OF LIFE." By Laurence Housman.

"FOUR FABLES." By T. W. H. Crosland.

"THE TWO MARGUERITES." By Arthur H. Holmes.

"A WHIFF OF LAVENDER." By Hope Crompton.

"THE MERROW." By J. T. Kingsley-Tarpey.

DIES IRÆ

As suddenly as it had come the vision vanished from before Clement's eyes, and he found himself alone again in his cell, and in darkness, save for the one long strand of light wherewith the moon kissed the imaged body and the five wounds of Christ. But, waking or sleeping, he knew not which, he had seen the very face of the Crucified, no longer trickling blood and appealing, but burning like a flame of fire, and heard his voice, his voice as of many waters, saying, "To-day is my coming; be ready!"

So Clement lay on his bed and trembled and rejoiced; for he was old, and had feared that the coming of the Son of Man was not for him to see. From his youth up he had awakened with each returning dawn with "Perchance to-day; who knows?" upon his lips; yet his seventy years had gone, and the skies had not opened. Seventy years! it was a score of seventies since the promise, and the world and the Church herself were waxing old as a garment.

To-day! it was after midnight; would the dawn ever come quietly again to flush the red roof of Périnol? In a moment the golden trumpets might ring out; hark! he heard them afar off now, beyond the outer husk of the world: or was it only the wind blowing out there, over the reeds of the marsh? All the world was unwarned; even the brethren slept. And the Son of God would come and find them sleeping!

The moon shone more brightly on the dead Christ, for a cloud had sped away. To Clement it seemed that the sky was beginning to dazzle in the East, like lime in the burning. Another cloud veiled the moon, and Clement thought it was the shadow of angels' wings, spreading across the heavens. For the

wonderment of the vision was not yet quite gone from him, and he lay there a moment holding his breath. Even in that minute when the last grain in Time's hourglass was falling, Satan was active, whispered in his ear with subtle words, how to Clement only was this vouchsafed to be known; wherefore Clement might well think himself the holiest of all. But Clement called on the name of God, and Satan fled into the night to hide himself while yet he could.

Then again he remembered the sleeping brethren and the secure world, and he knew that he must find a holier than himself to marshal the servants of the altar and go out to meet the Lord. So he sought to rise from his bed and go to seek the abbot; but lo! the motions of his body would not answer his mind's desire. Every limb lay rigid as he had stretched it out, and in that last hour of need he was stricken a living corpse. He struggled, amazed, sweating with the anguish of his impotence; but the tense muscles stirred not, though his brain was lifting mountains. Meantime the brethren slept on, and the sky was lightening, lightening.

He lifted his voice and cried aloud in the silence, and his words rang through the passages of Périnol. "Awake, awake!" he cried, till at length the snoring brethren stirred, and turned on their sides; for they had rested but one hour since the vigil. He cried louder, and a novice came yawning to his cell, charged with an angry message to hold his peace. But Clement called for the abbot, and the abbot came at last by force of his importunity, with a year's penance on his lips.

In a minute the tale was told, and then the abbot looked out at the quiet night, and imposed no penance. Forthwith the great bell began to fling its brazen clangour upon the air, and the monks fell to weeping and laughing and beating their breasts. For the end of the world was at hand, and they must go out to meet the Bridegroom. "To the Plain, to the Plain!" they cried, that they might be ready to shout "Ave!" when the first wing fluttered; and each one said to himself that he would be the foremost to kiss the Five Wounds and be raised up.

They ran to fetch the cross and banners from the chapel. The abbot must have his vestments, each monk his beads and scourge, that the strictness of their rule might appease the wrath to come. They stripped the altar of its ornaments to fling them before the

Lamb. From moment to moment, in the midst of their haste, they flung themselves down each where he stood, and beat their foreheads on the ground. Meanwhile Clement lay in his cell, and watched the moonlight abandoning the dead Christ.

The great bell clanged more wildly ; for the sky was lightening, Time passing, and they knew not the hour. Then came feet flying for the last time down the corridor, past Clement's open door. He cried, saying, "Carry me out with you, that I may see him too." But they heeded him not ; only one flung back a word, "We dare not wait !"

The cross-bearer went before the abbot, raising the cross. The abbot's vestments swept the floor of the courtyard, and all the monks followed him. As they went they chanted with loud voices. The moon was sinking in the west as they stepped into the Plain, leaving the gate behind them open to the world. Clement, abandoned, heard their voices ringing out—

*Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat sæclum in favilla . . .*

And the last flicker of the moonlight died from his cell.

II

The monks of Périnol shivered in their brown frocks, for the air was chill between moondown and sunrise. They gathered their garments closer round them and kept watch on the sky. And some scourged themselves, and some did but pray ; while others sat huddled on the ground with their cowls drawn over their eyes. But the grey-haired abbot with the piercing eyes walked to and fro, muttering to himself.

They were gathered in a green field, like the shepherds at the time of the Birth of Christ. Before them and behind the meadows sloped. This was the highest ground of all the Plain, and the grass stretched before it met the horizon. Their backs were turned on the towers of Périnol. It was still, so still ; the wind of the dawn touched their foreheads and passed on without a sound. They were afraid of the silence, and hushed their prayers into whispers.

The sky grew red in the East ; then the hearts of the watchers were gripped with a sudden fear. The face of the abbot whitened, for he remembered the dues of which he had robbed God ; and the youngest novice fell to weeping. He was young out of the world ; the blood was warm in his veins.

Redder and redder grew the sky ; out of the silence suddenly burst the twittering of a bird ; day had dawned, and never again was the world to lie wrapped in sleep. The grey heavens leapt into flame, and fiery swords sundered the sky, making way for the chariot of God. Over the horizon the sun's face appeared ; there were spots on it as of blood. The monks stared into the East till their eyes were blinded with light ; and because the glowing clouds took on the similitude of an archangel, they cried aloud, each for himself, inarticulately. But never a sound was added to their voices. Presently they raised their heads again, and beheld the sun rising serene and majestic. So the time was not yet.

Then the abbot rose, and would have spoken, but as the words began to leave his lips one cried out "Hark !" and they all strained their ears ; yet heard no sound but the beating of their hearts. Nevertheless, he who had cried out put his hands to his ears, and declared with a lamentable voice, "The trumpet of the Lord !" and fell dead.

And the abbot would not be stilled, but accused himself, "I have taken the alms of the rich and concealed them from the poor !" but never a monk heard him, for each was shouting out his own sin, not knowing what he said. Then one tore the clothes from his body, and thrust his scourge into his neighbour's hands, bidding him in God's name lash. So on the instant each was scourging other, till the blood ran from their naked skins. The abbot also flung off his vestments, and ran to where a thicket of brambles grew, and rolled himself in them ; and he would let none be so holy as himself, but would have had the thorns set aside for his own salvation.

The clear day came, and the sun grew hot, drying the blood on the shoulders of the monks, blistering their skins. They lay on the green grass with their faces on the earth, and sobbed, for they were bruised and bleeding, and the time was not yet. At length one rose and snatched up a brown frock where it lay discarded, shouting, "Will you greet God naked ?" and the monks

were overwhelmed with the shame of the thought, and huddled on their garments, trembling lest the trumpet should sound untimely. And after that they all sat apart, brooding.

Then it was noon; the hot air quivered, and the roofs of Périnol flashed scarlet behind them. The brethren began to faint and see visions; in such wise that Deodat stretched out his arms and stumbled over the grass, thinking that he was sweeping along with the Lord of Hosts. Also the novice Jerome flung himself on the great cross which they had set up, and bore it down with his weight, so that he and it sprawled on the ground together, but he ceased not to kiss it; and Gregory trampled on the face of Amethyst, crying, "Ha, Lucifer!"

At the hottest hour, when the sun began to lean to the west, sleep fell on them, and they slumbered for a while, all but the grey abbot. He saw their closed eyes, and reasoned craftily, saying, "Now I will be beforehand;" but one wakened and caught him as he crept from their midst, shouting, "Nay, we will account together!" His voice fell on the sleepers' ears; they thought it was the end, and raised their hands to heaven. "Mercy!" they cried. But the vault above was empty.

So the day wore on. The sun grew red again, and sank. "Surely he will not come in the dark!" they said, and stared at each other. "'Tis for the hour that has begun," they said. But the hour passed, and the sun touched the edge of the world.

Suddenly one said, "He will not come at all!" and they shrank from him. "Fools, fools," he cried, and laughed, and now in the cool evening air they shivered at the sound of his laughter; and laughing he danced away over the green grass, and they heard him in the distance still shrieking with senseless mirth. To drown the sound of his laughter they began again to sing—

*Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvat sæclum in favilla . . .*

But their voices made them afraid, and they ceased.

With the coming of the darkness the hope and fear of the day left them, and their hearts were turned to unreasoning rage for that the vision of Clement had played them false; they remembered

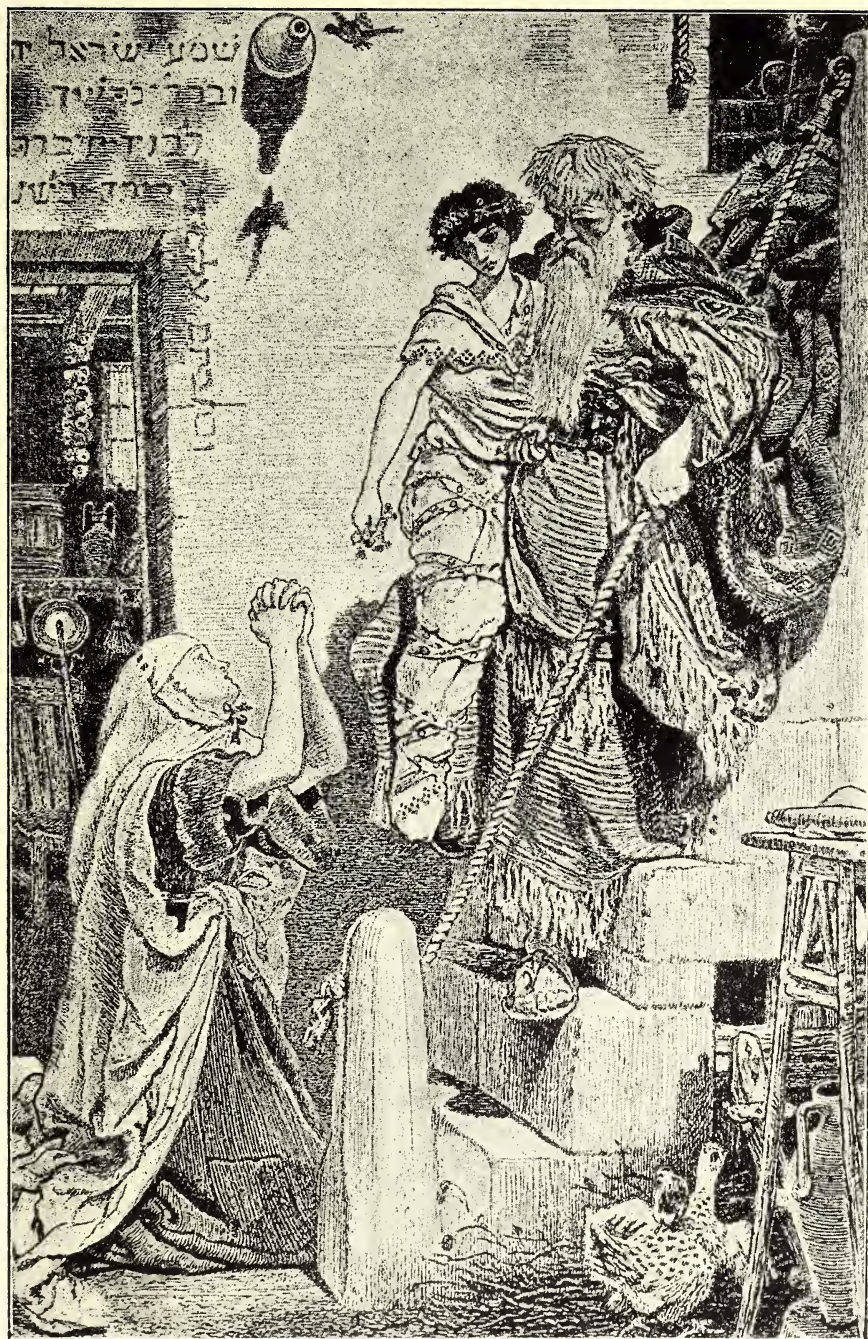
the useless agonies of the slow hours, and cursed him. One after another they rose and trudged back to the abbey of Périnol.

Clement lay dead ; but behold, his cell was all lit up, and over against his bed was ranged a comely altar with fair tall candles still burning, and the fashion of it was as at the sacring of the mass.

Yet they knew that he had not stirred, and that no altar had ever stood there before that day ; wherefore they proclaimed a miracle. And doubtless the abbey of Périnol would have got great honour thereby ; but that night it was destroyed by fire, and all the monks of Périnol with it.

Cecil Hartley.

*The Plate facing this Page and illustrating "The Staff of Life"
is after a Drawing by FORD MADDOX-BROWN, by
arrangement with Mr. F. HOLLYER.*



THE STAFF OF LIFE

THE hot sun blazed on the white-limed walls of the village and on the sandy footway that led up to the chief's house. Under the door-lintel hung a clay bottle containing water; about the mouth of it went the slow buzz of flies.

Three gleaners had come up from the harvest-field and thrown down their bundles in a small lean-to shed that abutted on the wall. They knew that already, up in the low room on the roof, the child lay dead.

"Where has his mother gone?" asked one.

"She had gone to find the man of God."

"Ay? Will she bring him back to-night, think you?"

"She took the best of the asses, and one of the lads to run with it. She will not be long."

"Have you been in to see him?"

"No; he is in the little chamber, and the door is shut."

"There is the window; from the top of the shed one could look in."

The youngest rose, and wrapped her veil thickly for a protection over her head.

"Against the wall there it is like a furnace," she said, as the others helped her to climb.

"What do you see?" they asked presently, when she had pushed in the shutter.

"It is so dark!" she answered, and then—"Ah! I begin to see his hand. Oh yes; the little straw basket he was making is still in it! Now the flies are coming too; someone ought to go in and cover him."

"No, not in there! No one goes in."

"Now I see his face—like a girl's. Ah! she has put flowers; they have not faded—in there it is quite cool." She drew back the shutter, and came down again.

Across the sand wriggled a scorpion : with it trailed a string fastened upon one of its limbs.

One of the women pointed : "He did that yesterday—he was playing with it. Catch it, and tie it till she comes back ! She will like to see it ; it will help her to weep."

A man came running up the street, carrying a staff. Even to the red fillet he wore he was grey with the dust of his speed. He passed the women without looking at them, and went up by the stepping-stones in the wall to the chamber on the roof.

"He is from the man of God !" said one of the women, and she went over and kissed one of his footprints in the sand. Another reached down the jar of water. When the messenger emerged and descended, she held it to his lips.

"Peace be with you !" he said after drinking, and started out with speed to return by the way he had come.

The third woman again climbed to the roof of the shed, and looked through the slot in the wall. "He has laid the staff over the body," she said.

"Come," said one of the three, "we must go down and carry more drink to the reapers ; the steward will beat us for being so long."

"We will tell him his master's child is dead, then he will forget to beat us."

They had left their heavy pots at the well. Filling these, they lifted them to their heads, and went erect and free-handed down into the plain whence came the sound of reaping.

One said, "Abner himself is reaping ; the gleanings he leaves belongs to me to-day. Do not tell him the child is dead—he will stop, perhaps, to mourn."

"We be sisters," said the others, "and will share with you ; we will not tell."

In the evening when it began to be dark, Abner returned to his house. Up in the village it was known that the child had been dead, and was living because the man of God had come.

The door of the house had sheaves piled round it, and garlands across the lintel. Against the sheaves sat the mother holding the child in her arms. He was playing with the little scorpion—now dragging it back by its string, and again driving it forward with a switch. The scorpion danced with rage, and the child smiled with quiet pleasure whenever his mother laughed.

"See!" she cried, holding him up, "your son lives!"

As soon as he saw that it was his father, the little one got off his mother's lap, and trotted up to make filial obeisance. Each little step he made was a glimpse of paradise to the mother; she cried, weeping, "He lives, but he has not spoken!"

Abner lifted the child in his arms. "My son," he said, "where hast thou been? What has God done for us this day?"

The boy looked down into his father's face with pleased shyness; he parted the black beard, and looked in at the red mouth that smiled at him; then he dropped, and snuggled his head, looking aslant at the villagers, who gaped, watching him. His look slipped back to his father's face, where the big mouth was; and again he parted the beard, and thrust forward the invitation of a playful finger. "Open!" he said, and the mother cried aloud for gladness at hearing once more the sound of her child's voice.

All the while the child and his father played with grave prepossession. Now the mouth bit too soon, now too late. At last the finger was caught and held.

"Ow-wow!" cried the boy in vexation, peevish at the teeth for biting too hard, and at himself for getting trapped over quickly in a good game.

"If I let you go, speak then!" cried the father "Tell us where you have been!"

"I will speak!" said the child: and the crowd drew in.

Abner sat down, holding his son between his knees. The boy lifted his eyes and drew a procrastinating breath. For imagination that flagged he caught a respite. "He is up there!" he nodded mysteriously, meaning the man of God.

"The babe tells the truth!" cried his mother. "The great one is yonder in his chamber."

"Ah, bah!" said the father. "Go on, and tell us where you have been!"

"The sun made me sick," said the child, jogging his mind for something to say; "I was hot, and I lay down. Presently I went to sleep; then I knew where the man of God was. In my mouth was a little grain of seed—something I had eaten. A raven came and carried the seed away, and took it to the man of God. The man of God put it in the ground, till presently it grew up, and he

sat under the shadow of its leaves. I was glad because he was cool."

He looked at the ring of faces—of men and women and grey-beards listening to his words. He became self-conscious, stopped, and began peering. "Where is he with the pincers?" he asked. He was comforted when his stringed reptile was returned to him.

"I tell you," he said, testing its temper by pulls on the string, "the tree made a blue shadow with its leaves over the prophet. He ate the fruit; out of the branches he cut a staff for himself."

"The staff he sent!" cried the mother. "Let thanks be!"

"When the staff came," said the child, "coolness came: the sickness went out of me. But when the man of God came, all the corn-sheaves by the door stood up and bowed."

"It is holy truth," cried the mother, who had not seen it. "Hear now the mouth of the blessed babe!"

The child let fall the string, for the worried scorpion, biting itself, had died, and lay useless and unamusing in the sand.

"What more?" asked Abner.

"Only when I awoke I was well, and the man of God was there. Carry me up that I may look at him, for he belongs to me!"

The father lifted the child, and went up to the small chamber on the roof. At the doorway he had to stoop low for entering. In the dusk, upon the bed, the prophet lay stretched in exhausted slumber: by his side a staff, blossoming wonderfully, distilled a strong fragrance about the room.

The child put his hand to his head as if some pain were there, and spoke slowly and with difficulty. "My father," said he, "years hence, when thou art in thy grave, bearers will again carry me as now to the place where yonder man of God lies. And so soon as my flesh touches his bones, I shall revive because of him, and stand up upon my feet a living man! Lay me down by him!"

Abner laid down his son, and already the child was asleep, with his face in the prophet's beard.

"I have heard thy son speak prophecy!" said Abner to his wife, when he had come down from the loft; "and he tells that there is to be a future life. Yea, wherefore not? for I saw the staff, and it blossomed!"

Laurence Housman.

FOUR FABLES

I

"WE write beautiful things that men may forget them," quoth a poet.

"Yet who keeps count of all the roses?" quoth another.

II

LIFE scourged him down the ways. And in his smart he railed against Life.

Then he saw Death.

"Oh, delicate Life!" he said.

III

"YEARS of fasting and meditation have brought me to the possession of a wonderful truth," remarked the old wise man.

"Discover it unto us," commanded the King.

"Let me whisper," said the old wise man.

And he whispered, "The Devil—is a WOMAN!"

"I have suspected as much myself," quoth the King, who had just returned from his honeymoon.

IV

"AH, how I wish that I were white!" sighed the red rose.

"That is very singular," said the nightingale, "for just now the white rose told me that she would give a whole June dawn to be red."

"Quite so," answered the red rose. "But then, you see, she is white!"

T. W. H. Crosland.

THE TWO MARGUERITES

LUCAS STEVENS is dying! I can hear the message in the bells which call from the stunted steeple below me, between the lake and the crowding hills which wait in the setting sun. Lucas Stevens is dying! The warning lies in every clang and wandering murmur, albeit the ringers pull with the lightest heart, albeit the village knows naught of the man or his name.

How glorious is the sunset! The billowed colours lure the eyes too far for their small strength. See the dazzling bars which serve to darken the mountain peaks! The snow lies on the northern heights, and takes the flush of the weakening crimson, while southwards streams of yellow and subtlest green run to the bend of the sea which shows only there. But before me it is a revel of glories, the splendour of an unchecked beauty, the ordered riot of a painter's richest dream.

And Lucas Stevens is dying! Muffled footsteps reach my ears from the next room where he lies. He sleeps, I know—sleeps as they bade me sleep, for simple loss. An hour or two will pass, and someone will knock at my door:

“Madam, he asks for you.”

Already I can hear the words. For he will wake once again—once again, and then the end. I felt the weight of his helpless form upon my arms just now, before we had fully spoken; before we knew that the night had come. Yet I could not doubt that his lips were happy as I kissed them, for my gain only. Poor lips! how tender, how yielding, how belied!

This it is to write: to make confession to one's self. Earth holds the strength, but man's is the secret. The sun is falling lower, lower, but the day passes more quickly from my heart; now the bells are silent in their steeple, but it is I who feel the

loss, and almost dare to challenge it. Why are the angels solemn folk? Have they no victory to claim? Mourn for the defeated, if you will, but for the victors a ringing joy is earned. The scoffer wears an anxious face, the trickster's eyes lose light. Truth is the handmaiden of love, good whereby to succour, good whereby to ward off the ugly glare of life. And have we not asked of truth? Has not the victory been ours? Who would try to take that faith from me? And yet—

I hear the footsteps again. Is he awake? They promised they would call me: let me go on quickly. These last hours must see the story told: in his absence I shall not need the words. Let others read if they will, the writing is for my own sake—from the first moment when he called from the sea, to the last which surely comes.

The breath of that night is with me now. The village lay sleeping in its shelter above the beach, the moon coursed on the water, and drew its sheet athwart the sturdy pier. Ah! the air was far too chill for him that hour. I leaned against the rail and listened to the sucking of the sea around the green-stained beams, waiting I knew not for what, yet eager for the secret of the shadows. The sound of oars in their rowlocks came over the jut of land which divided the bay. I listened, wondering whose the boat might be. A moment more, and a punt crossed the moon's track. It was Lucas Stevens, though I knew it not then. A few more strokes he pulled, then rested on his oars, and turned his face to the quay.

“Marguerite! Marguerite!”

None could hear that voice and forget its delight. It came expectant, promising, satisfied, appealing, glad; strong enough to bear its message to the shore, low enough to mingle with the murmurs of the waves in the ears of those who heard it at a greater distance.

“Marguerite! Marguerite!”

No answer was given, and my heart rebelled against the silent voice. I raised my arm, the white sleeve showing plain against the shadow in which I stood; then afraid, ashamed, I waited while the boat sprang in towards me.

“Marguerite! At last!”

The joyous cry escaped him as for a moment he stood in the

boat and looked up at me. But I hid my face, and so he found me when he had scaled the ladder, and stood at my side.

"What is it, dear?" he asked, as he gently drew away my hands. "Why do you—?"

He started back, too bewildered to speak the anger which had sprung upon him. His fingers gripped with the fierceness of his sudden passion; his breathing was quick, short, hard. Then he stepped nearer me, and gazed at me keenly.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

But my throat had tightened, and only the tumult of my bosom answered him.

"Who are you?" he asked again, and there was that in his voice which bade me meet his wondering look.

It was enough. His was the subtlest gift: to make unconscious demand; nor was the demand too great. Madly, recklessly, I thrust myself upon his mercy, mutely imploring him with the innocence and beauty which I knew were mine.

"You will not speak?" were his words; but already I had won.

"I heard you call," I whispered; "there was no answer; my name is Margaret."

"You, too, are Marguerite?" The words were soft, tremulous.

"The name had never come to me so strangely," I cried; "I was wrong, but I was bound to answer your call."

"Yes, you were wrong," he answered, and he went away.

For a moment only I watched his figure merge into the night, but even so I watched too long. What is the heart of woman that it should answer to so little known an appeal? And yet, and yet, is there ever virtue in delay? Is not the knowledge within the longing, and the need within the hope? Cannot a word make fullest revelation? Music is music, and the heart which feels will answer; passion is passion, and all the hours shall know it; life is life, and all of us are subject. I could not let him go: I had learnt of him too little, he had found in me too much.

He heard my step and turned.

"You will forgive me?"

"Forgive you for being Marguerite?" His manner was light to reassure me, but the kindness failed me.

"I am not Marguerite," I cried, and I know he took my meaning.

For silently he sought my hand and led me to a sheltered corner, where, before the sea, a rough plank seat was fixed. There we sat in the night, astir through a hope which sought then hid from us. Far forward he bent, his thin hands clasped between his knees, his eyes on the helpless waves. I saw his face was fair, the forehead high and broad, his beard and moustache dark and waving; his lips full and pure. So soon the revelation had begun! I looked with him out on the ocean's unceasing stress; I took to myself the mystery of his companionship. But of him—what of him? The silence burned round my heart, and breathlessly I asked:

"Who is your Marguerite?"

He started but did not speak, and I chafed under his aloofness.

"Who is she?" I asked again, fearful of my intolerance.

"She is my wife," he answered calmly.

"Your wife!"

He looked hard at me, but I would not see him.

"She lives on the cliff yonder. We were married in secret."

I made no sign, for I knew he would tell me more. And so it was. Yet there was a droop in his voice.

"She lives with her parents; they are poor, but proud as kings. My father was their master once, and wronged them, so they say. I do not know. He is dead now; I am here as a visitor; no one knows me but her."

"She is young?"

"And beautiful."

I bent to him and whispered: "That is the reason—?"

"It is one reason," he answered hotly, again quick to take my meaning. Then he rose abruptly, and added:

"It is growing cold; I must go."

"She will not come?" I asked.

"She cannot always," and he hurried to his boat.

I watched until he had crossed the moon's track and rounded the promontory, now even blacker than before.

There was the sound of muffled footsteps once again, and I went to his room. But he still slept, and I must hurry on, lest the last hour come too soon.

Oh! where to re-begin? How to choose from the mass of recollections crying out to be heard? If one word might radiate the sense of many! If one thought might tell the turmoiled passions of a life! Yes, of a life, for the greatest that can be has already come to me. The love experienced has yet to be lived with—alone. Love is an answer to our call—ah! what an answer came to mine! That night on the quay, the next, and the next—where was the beginning, where the assured end?

Again I heard the call across the sea :

“Marguerite! Marguerite!”

Again I answered, as he knew I would.

“She is not here,” I whispered, as he took my hand.

“A letter came to me,” he told me. “Her mother is ill : she cannot leave her.”

“Then you came—?”

“To see you, Marguerite.”

My heart was overwhelmed, but I would not show it.

“You know nothing of me,” I said, with what coldness I could summon.

“I have found what I need,” he answered, and there was gladness in his voice.

But I would not show my joy, and raised objection as before.

“I asked of you, and you told me ; my ground is sure. You ask me nothing : it must be because”—

I hesitated, flushed with shame, but he pressed me to be frank ; and at last I added :

“Because you want nothing.”

He laughed, and took my hand in his, saying :

“No, no ; it is because what I want can be given by no one but myself.”

Then we looked at one another, and he spoke quick, burning words :

“Do you think your face can fail to speak to me more surely than your words? Do you think the night so hides you that I cannot see your beauty and trace your thought? Often we have met, but each meeting is so linked to the one before that it is but one meeting, one whispering, one—yes, one hope.”

“But you have seen *her* often since we first met,” I urged, half-fearing, half-craving for, the meaning that his words might have.

"Yes, I have seen her," he answered in duller tones.

I thought he shivered, and begged he would be gone. But he put aside my fears, and fell a-thinking, as it seemed. So I sat by his side quite silent, listening to the mysteries which were breathed across the sea; glorying in the love which I knew had come, yet praying it might go, for his sake.

Hush! he surely spoke? I listened. His voice was low yet deliberate.

"There is one love, and only one. Let the night pass: it is the day which makes all things known. Shall we sorrow that we love? God, it is a croaking world! One error, and a thousand benedictions turn to solemn curses; one error, and the truth must hide its shamed face!"

The words trembled and filled me with a bitter fear.

"Truth knows no shame," I whispered back to him; "the shame is in the lie. Life is akin to death if what we do is not of ourselves."

"Ah! Marguerite, Marguerite," and the mystic beauty lay in his voice once more, "to be ourselves! It is not that we need—it is not that I need!"

"What then?" I cried.

"What do I need?" he echoed.

But before he answered me, he rose and bade me stand facing him. Then with a touch scarcely rougher than the breeze which passed us, he laid his hands on my cheeks so that his finger-tips covered my temples, and made this solemn reply:

"I want to be like you, Marguerite."

"Like me? Ah! if you knew."

"I do know. I love you."

But even then I sprang from his touch.

"Remember!" I cried, and pointed to the cliff. A light was shining from an upstairs window.

"I will remember." His voice was hollow, and he turned away, and went down to his boat.

But my love was affronted, and I sprang forward to keep him with me. One quick step I made, and then my arm was gripped fiercely from behind, and I was held fast.

"Come back!"

The hiss of the words seemed scarcely human, but I knew

it was a woman who spoke. I made no effort to release myself, and we went to the shore-side of the two or three buildings which stood between us and the village spread upon the slope of the hill.

"I am glad I came."

There was more violence in the short speech than she would have been thought capable of, though her features were firm. Yes, and beautiful too. Had he not said so? Not for a second did I doubt that this was the Marguerite he had made his own—a Marguerite with dark brown hair, rich blue eyes, a firm mouth, and wilful chin.

"You know me?" she asked, with withering cynicism.

"Yes, I know you," I answered.

"I heard everything he said to you," she went on. "I was there from the beginning, but I did not mean to watch or eavesdrop. Your greeting made me do it. However, it is best as it is."

"Best?" I echoed in amazement.

"Yes, quite the best. Lucas Stevens is my husband: let that be! The end has come!"

I started.

"You wonder at that? Perhaps you may, but I am not afraid. I loved him with all my soul; I love him now; but none the less, the end has come."

There was a dignity about her which I at once hated and worshipped; but I had no answer to make to her announcement.

"The world does not know that we are married: I kept silent for my parents' sake."

"You will make it known?" I asked.

"No."

The word beat upon me until I sickened under its attack. Oh! the misery of it all! And yet if she was resolved, and he knew his own heart—

"See," she cried, and her words cut like knives, "this is my pledge to you."

Unfastening her dress, she drew out a wedding-ring which hung from her neck by a piece of ribbon. She untied the ribbon and cast the ring into the sea.

"My sacred pledge, by a wedding-ring worn but for a few hours, never to be worn again!"

"I ask for no pledge," I answered her with difficulty. "The pledge should come from me—the pledge that I never see your husband again."

Whereupon she crushed my arm with her furious fingers, and cried with ill-restrained passion:

"Do you think I would give welcome to a man who did not love me? Do you think I cannot read his thought? You shall take him—he is yours! You shall take him away from here, live with him as his wife, tend him, worship him, suffer with him! You shall never breathe my name again, nor let him breathe it. He is dead to me—yes, dead!"

Her words staggered me with their violence, and I could not speak.

"Swear to me to do this!" she demanded.

"You forget—" I began.

"Swear to me!" was the still more imperious demand.

Then I made the oath.

Lucas Stevens is dying! My God, how it all comes back to me! Three years ago, that is all. Three years of wandering, of passionate embraces, of hidings from the world! How much longer could it have lasted for him, for me? Ah! why do I ask, when I live through him? He sleeps with my name on his lips; he wakes to the knowledge of my presence. But I often wonder if he thinks of the girl who lived in the cottage on the cliff; the woman who loved him, married him. Perhaps—

The nurse has called me. He whispered but a word:

"My Marguerite!"

God! if it had not been for me!

Arthur H. Holmes.

A WHIFF OF LAVENDER

THEY were sisters, and they lived in a quaint little cottage on the outskirts of a provincial town. Miss Miriam, the elder of the two, tended the garden, and when a leaf fell, or a rose scattered its petals, she hurried out and swept it up even if it occurred in the middle of a repast. To Miss Sophia's share fell the housekeeping and the watching over the morals of a youthful maid, whose life was made a burden to her by reason of her mistresses' passion for cleanliness.

Miss Miriam was of a cheerful disposition and inclined to be stout, though her energy was boundless. Miss Sophia was thin, almost angular, and her face wore a weary expression. The Doctor's wife, who had a sharp tongue, said she was blighted, like the flowers after the first autumnal frosts; in her youth she had had her romance, and it had been a failure. Miss Miriam, on the contrary, had neither loved nor been loved; the world had always been for her a severely practical one.

Miss Sophia was after all an object for commiseration; when she was barely eighteen, with a tinge of a sentimental prettiness about her, a Professor had come to the town. He was a quiet, studious man, and he fell in love with Miss Sophia's sentimental prettiness.

One day the Professor went to her father and asked him for Miss Sophia's hand, but the Professor was poor and unassuming, and her father said "No." Miss Sophia alternately wept and rebelled in secret, but in those days women had no opinions of their own, or if they had, they never spoke them.

The Professor left the town, and Miss Sophia grew pale and wan. That was thirty years ago. Time passed, her parents died,

and the Professor married. Miss Sophia saw the announcement in the paper; she cut it out with great care, and put it away in a little box with a bundle of yellow letters and a faded rose. On each anniversary of the day that the Professor proposed to her, Miss Sophia retired upstairs and re-read the letters—she used to sit by the window, with her thin nervous hands folded in her lap, and go over in her mind all the details of that eventful day. Before going downstairs she unlocked and opened a cupboard pervaded by a fragrant odour of lavender; it held the hat and gown she had worn when the Professor proposed. The hat had long blue strings and a wreath of crushed roses. Miss Sophia smoothed out the strings tenderly with tremulous fingers, sighing softly to herself—once she had put on the gown and hat, and tried to imagine she was young again.

Sometimes when she came downstairs her eyelids were red; then Miss Miriam would become unusually cheerful, until she saw her sister resume her weary smile, when she returned with renewed vigour to the tending of her garden.

One day in early spring Miss Sophia received a letter. Her hand shook as she opened the envelope; it was from the Professor. The letter was to tell her that he was going to pass through the town in a few days with his wife and family, and if she still lived there he would like to bring them to see her. Miss Sophia handed the letter to Miss Miriam; Miss Miriam read it and looked at her sister.

“Shall we ask them to lunch?” she inquired in an awed voice.

Miss Sophia’s pale cheeks flushed.

“No, Miriam; I shall write and tell him I am going away. I—I—could not bear that he should see me as I am now.”

“But, dear Sophia, you never go away; where could you go to?” gasped Miss Miriam.

“No, Miriam; but just this once I do not think it would be very, very wrong of me to say that I was.”

Miss Miriam considered for a few moments, and acquiesced.

When evening came a letter had been written and despatched, much to the relief of both sisters. So great had been the commotion caused in the tiny household by the arrival of the letter, that Miss Sophia had permitted a few flakes of dust to settle in the drawing-

room, while Miss Miriam had actually overlooked a weed in the pathway.

The day came for the Professor to pass through the town. Miss Sophia rose early, and pulled up her blind to let in the first glints of a spring sun. The sky overhead was blue; she remembered the sky had been blue and the air warm and scented the day the Professor had proposed—and that was thirty years ago.

At breakfast Miss Sophia wore an abstracted air, and Miss Miriam avoided looking in her direction. The situation was a delicate one, and she wished to appear to notice nothing—Miss Sophia's eyes were red. As they were leaving the table, Miss Sophia, clasping and unclasping her hands nervously, said:

"Do you think, Miriam, when the train is due you could go down to the station and watch for him at the barrier? I—I—should like to know how he looks."

"Certainly, Sophia," replied Miss Miriam cheerfully. "I want to buy some bulbs for the rockery, and I can take the station on my return."

"But on no account must he see you, Miriam; because then he might discover that I was at home, and it would pain him to find I had not told the truth."

Throughout the morning Miss Sophia wandered round the house, flicking away each speck of dust as it chanced to settle. One o'clock came, the luncheon hour, and Miss Miriam had not returned. Miss Sophia went to the gate and looked anxiously up the road. At half-past one Miss Miriam came.

"The train was very late," she murmured.

There was a pause; they walked up the little path together without speaking. At luncheon, after the maid had left the room, Miss Sophia said:

"Was he very much changed, Miriam?"

"Very much, Sophia; I hardly knew him, he has grown so—so stout, and his face is quite red."

"Oh," sighed Miss Sophia, "his figure was his strong point. And his wife?"

"She was—well, she too was quite stout—and there were several children."

Miss Sophia asked no more; she thought of him always as she

remembered him in the rose-garden days, when he wooed her to the song of the birds. Later, when the tea-hour came, Miss Miriam waited in vain. Upstairs in Miss Sophia's room the door of the lavender cupboard stood wide open ; it was empty, and the grate was choked with ashes. Miss Sophia's romance of thirty years had ended.

Hope Crompton.

THE MERROW

THE following extracts are from letters which came to me scattered over a space of a couple of years. I have suppressed nothing except what seemed to me irrelevant to the story they tell; and I make no comment, leaving it to the individual reader to separate for himself fact from visionary imaginings, and reason from superstition.

“At last I have come ‘home’ to take possession of my inheritance, such as it is. I cannot describe to you the oddness of the sensation, for one who has led such a vague and wandering life as mine, of having, all at once, a house and lands of his own. It is much as some rudderless vessel must feel, I should think, the sport for so many days of every wandering breeze, come to anchor at last within the safe shelter of the harbour. And indeed already I take root. I am not only a landowner, I am a landlord, and I begin to realise that I have responsibilities.

“This question of money is infinitely perplexing. I have been puzzling my brains over it lately, but I never expect to get near understanding it. All the same, I have had to knit my brows and look wise, for the sake of the old fellow who has been ‘submitting accounts’ to me.

“There seem to be people who make of money what beauty is to you and me. A strange race of beings! And yet human too. In my life I have never had money, and I have never wanted it. That is, beyond enough for use, like buttons on a coat. What could one do with a pocket full of buttons? Yet here I am, face to face with this problem: my land has produced, year by year, since I became the owner, a crop of—buttons. This wrinkled old button-

getter shows me rows of figures on paper, and expects me to tell him what he is to do with all these buttons.

"In Germany I remember watching the making, growing, felling, and remaking of the forests. I don't mean that I waited for some thousands of years to watch the process, but I saw the different stages, and marked how man, thoughtful for generations to come, planted fresh trees where he cut down the full-grown ones. As I pondered the problem, I realised that the husbandman sows seed for every crop he gathers. It became clear to me that the landlord must also sow—buttons.

"I laboured long in coming to this conclusion, and then I carried it, with all the pride of a new discovery, to my foster-parents, who rent the home farm. The idea was by no means strange to them. They had a name for it, which I have forgotten. The approval of these old friends lifted a great weight from my mind. I could hand over the button problem to them, and be sure it would be wisely dealt with.

"The place is strangely homelike in feeling. It is twenty-five years since I was here, and yet I have that sense of intimacy with all the ways, and with the people, that one supposes only comes from long usage. I incline to think that we owe more to nurture than to inheritance. Here am I, at least three parts English by parentage, and English of the most hopeless type. The dull, Philistine, aristocratic class. The one-fourth of Irish blood that I can boast is no better. I cannot find a patriot, or a scholar, or a poet, in the whole of my ancestry. Yet at my foster-mother's breast I neutralised the accumulated bad blood of generations, and became half peasant. How else can I explain the ease with which I enter into their hearts? I sit by my 'mammy's' fireside, not an alien, but a part of her household, one of her family.

"I cannot doubt that whatever of poet I may be I owe to this kindly influence in my childhood. You critics, who obscure your impressions by ticketing them with phrases, have nicknamed me a 'mystic.' In England, with your rank growth of cities spreading out like a disease over the fair cleanliness of the country, till scarcely a spot is left where a man can think out his thoughts alone, in seemly quiet, no doubt you must have some high-sounding word to express what every Irish peasant is by nature. Here the 'Good People' still dwell with us. My dear 'Mammy' Cleary

puts down a saucer of milk at night with as much unconcern as if she were feeding the cat. I asked her the reason, and she told me one of the cows was ailing, and she feared something had displeased the 'Good People.' A few years ago a neighbouring family, one of my own tenants, had a changeling. Those poems of mine, written in Germany, which you all found so fantastic, would be received as plain common sense here.

"And so you will understand that, though the moors and bogs stretch, wide and desolate, away behind the house, and the wider and more desolate ocean lies before it, I have no feeling of loneliness. I have more sense of companionship in these wilds than I had in London; and, as I said before, I take root."

"There is a kind of canoe in use on this coast, unlike any boat I have met elsewhere. It is built specially to slip in and out among the great Atlantic rollers, that are hardly still upon the calmest day. The very skilful, or the foolhardy, go out in all weathers; but I only venture out alone on those days when the swell is at its gentlest, and I can lie back, and dream dreams, and leave the boat to drift and rock at pleasure. Sometimes the charm of these dreams is their very formlessness, but yesterday I had a clear and perfect vision. The boat had been rising and falling on the long slow swell, and my thoughts had been straying, I hardly know whither, when suddenly a face rose out of the water, and remained for a moment quite close to mine. It was a pale and very beautiful face, with pale gold hair sweeping upward from the brow, and surmounted by a curious close green cap.

"In the evening, when my foster-mother brought in my dinner, I asked her if there are any mermaids left in these parts; she tells me she knows nothing of mermaids, but it is not very long since a Merrow was seen on the beach. It is considered very lucky to see a Merrow. I told her of my vision, and she said, 'sure enough that was the exact description of a Merrow.'

"Can you doubt after this that I have found my home and my place?"

"I have told you my 'vision,' and you must have the sequel to it.

"There is a long narrow stretch of silver sand on the shore,

running north and south, widening towards the centre into what we call our 'bay,' and bounded on either hand by the great cliffs that come down to the sea. Northward the coast becomes very rugged and broken, and there are caves and chasms that are rarely explored.

"I was strolling, very idly, along this path of sand, thinking of nothing but the beauty of the morning. The sun was hidden behind a thin veil of cloud, and the outline of sea and sky was lost in melting tints of pearl and opal. It was one of those days when the air seems to hold a secret; when the sense of warmth and light and beauty, hidden or withheld, is stronger than what we see. Suddenly a little breeze sprang up, ruffling the crests of the waves, and sending the loose sand and dried seaweed dancing along towards me. I stood a moment, waiting till the gust should have blown over, when something struck me sharply on the breast. I put up my hand, and caught it before it could fall. It was a little cap, curiously shaped, made of some green silken material, not unlike the long green ribbons of seaweed that you find on the shore, and it was frilled at the edge just as those are. In a word, it was just such a cap as had been worn by my Merrow.

"The thought came to me with all the force of certainty, that it had been sent as a message, and, hiding it carefully in my breast, I followed the narrowing path of sand towards the rocks.

"As I climbed round the first promontory I was stopped by a strange sight: a few yards before me, seated on a low rock, and combing out her long yellow hair, was the lady of my vision.

"What was she like? you will ask. Well, of that I can tell you nothing, save that she was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen. Small, and fair, and slender, she seemed to be; and the hand that held the comb, and the bare foot that rested on the sand, were of a wonderful fineness and delicacy. She was clad in some green straight-hanging garment, over which her hair fell, without wave or ripple, till it brushed the ground. But how can I describe the indescribable? And how can I convey to you the strangely uncanny yet natural feeling about the whole thing? The atmosphere—the place and the people—make it not only possible, but likely. And yet I am still so far of your world

that I convinced myself on the way home that I had been dreaming. I thrust my hand inside my breast, but lo! there was the little cap to give me the lie, safe enough.

"When I told my foster-mother of this new adventure, she looked rather grave. I did wrong, it seems, to keep the cap. The poor Merrow is dependent on her diving cap—she is a prisoner on earth if she loses it, and there is some mysterious bond between her and the mortal who becomes possessed of it. My 'mammy' begged me very earnestly to return it to the poor thing forthwith. She assured me 'trouble would come of it' if I did not.

"What kind of trouble, I wonder?"

"You have every right to reproach me, and I have no word to say in self-defence. I have written nothing for weeks, and the idea of letters has been peculiarly distasteful to me. I came upon a pile of manuscript paper to-day, scrawled all over with forgotten ideas. I looked at it with a sort of wonder; it belongs to the history of a man I used to know, but whose existence I had forgotten.

"All this is since the coming of Gudrun. Until now life has been something that could be written about; something to be dissected, analysed, pondered over. A tissue of dreams, sensations, experiences, intermixed and overlapping in such endless complexity, that nothing but the aloofness of the real ego made it possible to disentangle an idea here and there. Standing apart, and watching that fascinating maze, the poet can convince himself that he alone has discovered eternal truth. The mysteries of Life, of Love, of Death, are unfolded before him. And, my dear fellow, the long and the short of it is, he writes a great deal of nonsense that the world finds very beautiful. I am *living* now, for the first time, and I know that all the rest of my life I have been dreaming. And the reason you all find the stuff I wrote in my dreams so good is because not one of you has ever lived, really, and you would not recognise the truth if it could be written.

"But the strange thing is that it cannot be written. The one clear dominating idea that has ever possessed me is also the one that I cannot put into words. The vague, elusive fancies of my

former existence never defied expression as this does. So that I am forced to the conviction that when you begin to live you cease to be a poet. Poetry, that is to say, is either inside you or outside you. When it becomes your life, you can no longer share it with the world."

"You ask, very reasonably, for facts. As I can give you nothing else now, you are at least entitled to those. We were married a month ago, I think. My wife is a Scandinavian; her name I have told you. We shall live here; that seems the easy and natural thing at present.

"I am not so much in love with superstition as I seem to have been when I wrote to you earlier in the year. The truth is, my foster-mother does not like my marriage, and as she has no valid ground of objection she falls back on the superstitious. Nothing will convince her that my wife is a flesh-and-blood human creature. And, frankly, how could one prove it? And how can I blame my 'mammy' for thinking that so rare and fine a being must belong to another world? Perhaps if I could bring a Hottentot and an Indian, and set them beside her, I might persuade these simple folk that there is infinite variety among the races of men; but to them it is no more wonderful to believe that she is one of the dwellers beneath the sea.

"Gudrun knows nothing of all this. Her intercourse with the country people is necessarily very much restricted, and she is only dimly conscious of her own shyness and theirs."

"You ask for news of the 'estate.' The 'buttons' are bearing a royal harvest. Fences and outbuildings grow apace; thatches are mended and gates are hung, and a general air of prosperity pervades the scene. 'I can recommend this seed for a sure and early crop.' I copied that from an advertisement. I study the agricultural journals now; I am thinking of taking to farming; it seems to me the only fitting occupation for a poet thrown out of employment.

"The winter is a little dreary here—dreary for Gudrun, I mean. I have a feeling that we ought to be somewhere else—Italy, for example. But how to get there is the problem. This plantation of buttons has been a glorious thing, but it has the

effect of rooting us here, too. I don't suppose it really matters, but I can see now that my first plantation need not have been on such a lavish scale. You see, over here you have always to count that a certain proportion of your tenantry cannot pay the full amount of the rent, and a certain further proportion *will* not, if they can by any means avoid doing so. My wise old button-getter explains all this to me at great length, and he tells me also that my presence makes it more difficult for him to deal with these cases. So the truth is that, in spite of the 'general air of prosperity' to which I referred, there is something very like poverty indoors.

"There is something horribly perverse about the way this money question thrusts itself into all the relations of life."

"I have been writing again ; I wonder if that will surprise you. The first days of spring brought the need for it,—a bird's longing for flight, poignant, like a sense of physical pain. And the months of silence have meant growth, I think.

"Gudrun has not been well, and the close confinement to the house all through these weeks of mist and rain has weighed upon her spirits. And now the sunshine acts like a charm. Her great longing is for the sea—to the distress of my foster-mother—to be on it, or in it. That is out of the question just now, but it is something to be able to get near it. And in the summer, if all goes well, she can have her heart's fill of it."

"How absurd our divisions of time are! Since yesterday morning has been a lifetime, if one may count by heart-beats. I could not guess that so much of agony, of hope, and fear, and joy, could be pressed into one little day. It is over at last, and safely over. An hour ago my foster-mother brought me a shapeless bundle containing a human atom—my child—our child. I looked at it, expecting to feel some emotion, but I suppose I am wanting in the common instinct of fatherhood. I was conscious of nothing but curiosity, and a vague sense of resentment that a thing so inconsiderable should have cost so dear. For my wife has been very near death. But if the little creature's parents are indifferent, he has found a home and a welcome on the breast that fostered me."

"Gudrun creeps slowly, very slowly, back to life. I have only realised now what it meant that I caused my mother's death. What a terrible price to pay for being born! Our son is a lusty infant, and kicks and crows in sublime unconsciousness in his nurse's arms. 'Mammy' Cleary scarcely lets him out of her sight.

"I find myself in a state of perfectly futile revolt against—I can't give it any more descriptive name than atmosphere. It must be almost impossible to get well in such conditions, and I am powerless to alter them. Gudrun was an alien here from the first, and the simplicity of some people consists in disliking what they do not understand. Sometimes I have thought that the people about here would have been glad if my wife had died.

"She lies now on a couch by the window. To-day, when I came in, I found her faintly smiling, and with a little colour in her cheeks.

"'Tell me, what is a Merrow?' she said at once, when I came to her.

"'Who has been speaking to you of a Merrow, Gudrun?' I said.

"'Tell me first what it is,' she said, 'and I will tell you all the wonderful things I have heard.'

"Then I told her some of the fancies the country folk have about the 'Good People,' and the dwellers beneath the sea.

"'So they took me for a sea maid?' said Gudrun, smiling. 'It was both pretty and natural, I think. And who can say how far those thoughts are true thoughts? The sea has always seemed like home. The touch of it, the smell of it, are life to me. Perhaps I belong to the sea, really, and have strayed to land by mistake. I am sick for want of it. When I can get back to my native element I shall be well and strong again.'

"'Shall I give you back your diving cap, my Merrow?' I said, laughing.

"Gudrun looked at me in wonder, and I went and fetched the little green cap, which had lain closely shut away all this while. She smiled when I gave it into her hand.

"'Yes, that is my diving cap,' she said; 'that must have been what your foster-mother meant. The door was ajar, and they

forgot—or perhaps they thought I slept. It was a wonderful story, my husband;—I came to you walking on the water, and we were wed by a ring flung far out to sea. And your baby will not be safe from drowning until its mother goes back to her own people.’

“‘*My* baby, Gudrun?’ I said.

“‘The child is not mine,’ said my wife sadly; ‘it is yours and Mrs. Cleary’s.’

“And to this I could say nothing, for I knew it to be the bare truth.

“But what Gudrun calls ‘pretty and natural’ seems to me ugly and hateful. For it means that my wife is alone here in her weakness, with no human being to bring her sympathy or comfort but the helpless thing she calls ‘husband.’”

“Gudrun has been very ill. The doctor advises a hospital nurse. I think he has some inkling of the state of things here. He stayed with my wife while I rode twenty miles to the telegraph office. She is delirious, and keeps calling that she must go back to the sea. She has the little green cap always by her, and when I would have taken it away she asked me, piteously, how she could go without it to find her friends under the water.”

“No one can tell how it happened. We thought she was better, that the fever was past; the nurse had only left her for a few minutes. The moon was at the full, and we had been watching the broad path of silver across the sea. I had fallen asleep—the first time for nearly a week.

“And the terrible thing is that she was seen by more than one person, going towards the shore. Mike, our herd, thought it was a ghost, and crossed himself and went home to bed. And one of the fishermen saw ‘something white’ down by the sea, but he ‘made sure it could be nothing earthly at that hour of the night.’ So my poor wife fitted on the little green cap, and went down into the water ‘to find her friends.’

“So much we can guess, no more. For at this place the sea gives back nothing.

“And there is nothing to tell me that the whole thing is not a dream, a beautiful and horrible dream; nothing, that is, except a lusty baby that kicks and crows and grows fat in the care of Mammy Cleary.”

J. T. Kingsley Tarpey.

SIX PLATES

THE LESSER WHITE HORSE. After Albert Dürer.

MADONNA AND CHILD. After Giovanni Bellini.

JEANNE D' ARC. After D. G. Rossetti.

(By arrangement with Mr. F. HOLLYER.)

NOCTURNE. After J. R. Cooper.

LANDSCAPE. After J. F. Hudson.

THE GHENT GATE, BRUGES. After W. Strang.













ROBERT SCHUMANN : AN IMPERTINENCE

THIS article is called an Impertinence not because the writer intends always to refer to his subject as Bob or even as Robert, but because he intends—and it is preposterous to attempt it in the space—to ask and answer three questions : Was Schumann a great man, was he a great critic, was he a great composer ? The answer he makes on all three counts is, Not Guilty.

It would not be necessary to conduct this inquiry at the present, had not Schumann, like all second-rate men and some first-rate ones, suffered sadly at the hands of his admirers. There is and seems always to have been a peculiar type of mind compelled by its own nature to create for itself an idol to worship ; and it reveals itself by creating its idol in its own image, which is the image of Bottom. The idol must “roar, that it will do any man’s heart good to hear him” ; and anon he must “aggravate his voice so that he will roar you as gently as any sucking dove ; he will roar you an ’twere any nightingale” ; he must play Pyramus, Thisbe, and Lion all at once. Bottom tells us that the idol does all these things, and he certainly does them himself in the idol’s defence. These Bottoms have not spared Wagner (see the Daily Chronicle *passim* and Mr. David Irvine’s “Parsifal and Wagner’s Christianity”) ; but Schumann has suffered most from them. In Schumann’s defence they have roared so as to terrify the world, and anon so as to ravish the world’s ears with the sweetness of their roaring ; and they have proved to their satisfaction that Schumann essayed and succeeded in playing Lion and Thisbe and Pyramus. And the public has held up its hands in amazement, and placed Schumann on its list of dubious immortals, and has attended the Pops and other concerts to admire his dullest chamber-music and worst songs,

and the Richter and other orchestral concerts to admire his villainous fourth symphony. And now I come, my heart in my mouth, to rescue him from the domination of Bottom.

Was he a great man?

Certainly he was not one of the stupendous men : so much will be granted by everyone who has read any Life of him. He was not a great personality : he did not impress his contemporaries as Handel, Beethoven, and Wagner impressed theirs ; he complacently sat down at the feet of Mendelssohn, and was quite content to be regarded as musically Mendelssohn's inferior. He sat down also at the feet of the adorable Clara, and was content to travel with her when she was worshipped and he was almost disregarded. He might almost as well have been a prima donna's husband. Mozart's excessive gentleness hid the greatness of his character ; but to discern the difference between the two men it is only necessary to try to imagine Mozart following in the train of a Clara Wieck or devoting his days to the discovery of new traits of greatness in Mendelssohn's music, and his nights to publishing his discoveries. You cannot picture Mozart admitting the superiority of Salieri. He said of the greatest musician who has lived, " If I were not Mozart I would be Bach ; " and the modesty of the accompanying remark does not disguise his genuine opinion of himself. Schumann, in the conduct of life, also showed the second-rate-ness. He never *did* anything : he drifted into this and into that ; and he ended as principal of a music-school. He tried to master the piano, and had not the patience ; he must needs, as weak men so often do, try a short cut, and inevitably he came to utter grief. There is the curious petulance of a weak man in nearly all his letters, the ineffective assertiveness of a man who is not sure of his own strength. In this respect his letters are not unlike Bulow's early ones : " my individuality remains in the hands of God. " Fancy Wagner calling in outside assistance of this sort to preserve his individuality ; fancy Beethoven doing it, or Handel, or Mozart, or old Haydn ! Now I do not intend this as a depreciation of Schumann : a man may lack strong character and yet be more admirable than many men who have strong character and nothing else. But it may be pointed out that no artist ever yet achieved tremendous things in his art who was not something more than an artist, who did not manifest his personality in

the ordinary affairs of life, and show the hugeness of his art to be the outcome of his personality. Had Carlyle written nothing, the tradition would have come down to us that he was a great and a rare spirit; in Dr. Johnson's case the tradition has come down to us through Boszzy; a reading of any Life of Beethoven or of Wagner would show a man with no ear whatever for music that here was a man cast in the hugest mould. No letter or saying or deed of Schumann's implies anything of the sort; and we are asked to believe in him as a kind of freak, a man who expressed a mighty personality solely through his music, and gave no friend or enemy any glimmering of it in any other way.

Was he a great critic?

That within very clearly defined limits he was an excellent critic, I should be the last to deny. Had he been simply a critic, he would deserve to be held in remembrance if only on account of his discovery—for discovery it was—of the splendour of Schubert's music. He had a fine and true appreciation of Beethoven within those clearly defined limits. He had a genuine healthy contempt for the machine-made music of Meyerbeer. In reviewing the current music of his day he was most useful: whatever was false in intention or bad in point of workmanship he ruthlessly condemned; and if he somewhat overpraised stuff of only middling workmanship because the intention was, or seemed to him, good, we must bear in mind it was better that such music than entirely bad music should be bought by the public, and also that to induce the public to buy anything one must err rather on the side of overpraise. But even if his judgments had been always of a kind to be endorsed by posterity, or the best of his contemporaries, something more than a certain degree of taste and discernment is required before a man can be called a critic of the first order. He must be a master of language: musical criticism is a branch of literature, not of music; and Schumann was not merely not a master of language, but persistently wrote the most flagrant journalese—never, in fact, rose above journalese, and legal journalese at that. I have done what few men have done: I have read through all his reprinted criticism; and I find ninety-nine pages in a hundred filled with juries' verdicts—this is right or that is wrong; and in a very few instances only does he spread his wings and rise to the height of saying that something

brings a perfume of flowers into the room, or that a Chopin waltz makes him dream of counts and countesses dancing. When he deals with technical details he is generally on safe ground, and comes off triumphantly (though he made a few mistakes), but when he begins to give reasons for his judgments on æsthetic or emotional matters he nearly always fails. How could he express himself in words, never having learnt to express himself in words? Further, the highest kind of criticism, the only criticism which has a permanent value and does not die with its subject, or sooner, is the criticism in which the writer delivers no formal judgments, gives no reasons, but recounts the effect of the subject upon his own soul. That presupposes a soul, or rather, to be accurate enough to suit these days of science, a very definite and positive personality: the personal criticism of a man of weak or colourless or vague or uninteresting personality can have no interest for any living soul. In this highest sort of criticism the critic holds up himself as a kind of mirror: you judge the music by its reflection in this mirror, just as you might tell from the surface of the sea whether the sky is blue or cloudy, and whether the wind blows from the north or the south or not at all. Schumann's criticism could not possibly be of the highest order, for he had not a strong and positive personality. I cannot reverse the case and say his criticism showed he had no personality; for the finest personality could not have revealed itself through the medium of a pen so clumsy and numb as his. The final proof of the poverty of his criticism is that no one reads it, though many refer to it with an air of positive knowledge.

And now his music—was it of the first order of music? was he, as it is claimed that he was, amongst the greatest music-builders? This, after all, is the main thing. Had he written noble and splendid music, we should not care a single copy of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* whether his criticism was great or not, or whether he showed himself a powerful man in his everyday life. We should simply regard him as an extraordinary freak.

He tried his hand at many things, at symphony-writing, writing for the piano, at oratorio and opera, at song-writing and writing for other solo instruments. But before considering his efforts in any of these branches, it is worth while devoting a few minutes to the question of whether he had what we call, what we must

call, the absolute musical temperament: did he think in music at all? and if so, in the terms of what instrument did he think? There is a too common notion that, given an artist's soul, it is more a matter of chance than anything else whether the artist becomes a sculptor, a master-scavenger, or a great musician. Carlyle went further, and would have it that a Burns might have been a Shakespeare and either an Oliver Cromwell or a Mohammed. The truth is that if a man is born to work only in bronze, in bronze and in bronze alone will he work well; if he is born to write music, in music alone will he work well. Further, to make my meaning perfectly clear, let me point out that Chopin thought in terms of the piano, and only of the piano; Wagner thought in terms only of the orchestra; the latter could no more write for the piano than could the former for the orchestra. Of course anyone can write notes for piano or orchestra; there is as yet no law either in England or Germany to forbid it; but when we see Chopin's orchestral music or Wagner's music for the piano, we realise at once that neither is talking his native tongue—the tongue which Nature fitted him to speak. Of course some men have thought for more than one instrument, and others may still do it, though with the specialisation of the different branches of music the task becomes more and more difficult. But the question is, Did Schumann think, really think, in any of them? Now it will be said that the direction of the argument may be reversed, or that I have reversed it in the first instance, and am going to prove that Schumann had not the great musician's gifts because his music does not appear to me great. But for the present I am leaving his music out of the question. There are other indications of the pure musical temperament, and Schumann seems to me to have none of them. He did not go instinctively to music in his earliest youth, as did all the unquestioned sheer musicians—Bach, Mozart, Handel, Schubert, for example. He thought of writing about music quite as early as he thought of writing music. When he began to write music, he showed none of the artist's passion for mastering the technique of the art, none of the artist's intuitive feeling for the right way of doing things. He forced himself to work, and tried short cuts, and very fatal short cuts. Just as he tied up his finger to become a first-rate piano-player in "half the usual time," and lamed his hand and ruined any chance he might have had as a

pianist, so when he determined to write a symphony he bought a book on instrumentation, spent a few days over it, and wrote No. 1. When he found he had written an opening which the horns could not play, he said it didn't matter, and altered the phrase—the principal theme of the first movement—by shifting it up a third, thus converting it into something very different from its first form. And, horror of horrors, he seemed to think this made no difference! Much of his early music is sublime in its uncouthness: he seldom seemed to know quite what he meant; and what is worse, he never seemed to care very much, so long as he evolved something. To come now to his music in general, the only instrument in the terms of which he appeared able to think at all was the pianoforte; and his piano-writing is not perfect, not truly idiomatic, like Chopin's or Beethoven's or Clementi's or Mozart's. He probably thought better for the piano than for any other instrument, because he trifled with it in his youth, and because he always worked out his compositions on it. So here we have a musician without any of the usual signs of the musical temperament, without any of the signs of the high thinking power and sheer power of personality that saved Gluck and certainly helped Wagner, composing music which we are nowadays asked to place beside Beethoven's. Let me devote a few lines to a more detailed consideration of that music.

At the outset we are struck with its clumsiness of form, indeed its formlessness, and its incessant striving, often painful striving, after shape and coherence. In his bigger attempts one is at first rather surprised to find so often in the working-out or development section no real working-out or development. Schumann frequently develops a passage from one or more of his themes, but he repeats this passage again and again in various keys, and with or without changes in the orchestration, until the time for recapitulation arrives; and then he duly recapitulates as though the middle section really meant something, and he had done and not evaded his task. Of the symphonies, quite the worst in form and in this matter of shirking the development is the D minor, commonly called No. 4. I know no more tedious or meaningless piece of music than this. The opening promises well; then at the beginning of the Allegro we get no theme, but a mere figure which is repeated endlessly through this movement, and also through-

out the whole symphony, until one wishes devoutly that Mendelssohn had not written in "St. Paul" the figure that suggested it. The best of Schumann's symphonies is No 1, though even here that trick, that fatal trick, of repetition instead of development irritates one, with its reminiscence of the jabbering of the village idiot who sings one song the whole day. In all Schumann's symphonies we feel as the Yorkshireman did when he drank claret—"we get no furrader." Bottom, in his defence of Schumann, and especially of the symphonies, always says, "Yes, it is true the form leaves much to be desired, but look at the melody!" Well, on looking for the melody, I find little—nothing like the quantity distributed over his songs and piano-writings; and what there is, is so often given to instruments of the wrong genius that it makes no effect. Then says Bottom, going back, "But think of the form!" I have already had my say regarding the form; but when the form, or rather the formlessness and mere struggle for form, is pointed out to Bottom, he says, "But think of the poetic intention, the suggestiveness of Schumann's music!" And here it must be conceded that Bottom is not so far wrong as he wishes to be. Schumann undoubtedly had quasi-poetic moods, and he does suggest these moods in a great deal of his music, and especially in his piano concerto in A minor, in his songs, and in his piano works and the fiddle sonata in D minor. He never directly expresses anything, or rarely does it, but he does suggest things. That is why, I presume, poets love Schumann: he gives them elusive hints of things unseen, and does not tell them enough to hinder the free working of their imaginations. In A minor is the most perfect concerto in the world. There is not a powerful stroke in it; but it indicates a beautiful mood, even by a bar here and there actually communicates that mood; and the whole thing is admirably kept within the narrow and foolish bounds of the concerto form. It is the best attempt at form he ever made, and as an attempt at the concerto form he certainly may be said to have succeeded better than better men. Of much of his piano-music the same may be said, and of some of the songs. The Novelettes, particularly such of them as No. 5, in D, cannot be mistaken for the first order of music, but they are all highly interesting, and they all possess his peculiar suggestiveness. There is everlastingly the sense of a man translating out of a familiar into an

unfamiliar and uncongenial tongue ; but that seems even to add to their suggestiveness. The themes, as I have said already, are not altogether pianistic : many of them, as a friend of mine holds, make one think he had a stiff wrist and only set down what he could play. But they are good and quite entertaining stuff. Many of the songs can scarcely be overpraised. They are lovely, and nearer to full and true expressions of Schumann's nature than he came elsewhere. And what nature do they reveal ? A gentle man, sweet, kindly ; a fireside man, a dreamer of the vaguest of vague dreams ; a man destitute of high imaginative power, but not without fancy, rather commonplace, and never intended by nature to take the place in the world he sought to take. I will no more forsake this man, especially the part of him we know as his songs, than Mrs. Micawber would forsake Mr. Micawber. If anyone should reply, as Mr. Micawber replied to Mrs. Micawber, that no one wants me to forsake Schumann, I reply that a great many of Schumann's Bottom-admirers want me to forsake him. They call me to admire someone can bellow so as to make the ladies afeared—even such an one as the mighty Richard himself ; one who can roar like any sucking dove—another Mendelssohn ; one who was all things to all men, like the mightiest masters of music, in whom one seems to find nearly all one wants to find. But for me the true Schumann is the gentle, clever man who married and adored Clara, who failed in huge symphonies and wrote wonderful little piano snatches and songs, who knew some kinds of good music from some bad kinds, but could not distinguish between Beethoven and Mendelssohn. He was a charming little creature, who should have been born when the world was younger and it was possible to possess a small talent without feeling it necessary to pose as an artistic giant.

John F. Runciman.

FIVE POEMS

"THE BALLAD OF A SILVER QUEEN." By Elsie Higginbotham.

"LOVE ON THE BRIDGE." By Alan Wright.

(Decorated by the AUTHOR.)

"UNDERCURRENTS." By W. Kingsley-Tarpey.

(Decorated by E. E. HOUGHTON.)

"THE MOUNTAIN." By W. W. Gibson.

"LA BEALE ISOUD IN A LAZAR-COTE. By Gordon Bottomley.

THE BALLAD OF A SILVER QUEEN

WHEN the black-browed King sailed over the sea,
Gold was the hair of his bride;
When his warships parted the churning tide,
Yellow-gold of the August sheaves,
Burnished gold of October leaves,
It streamed in a shower to her knee . . .

The Fool heard the Queen give the King her word—
“By this gold you wooed me for,
By the length and wealth of its rendered store,
I swear no hand shall touch one curl—
Whether of King or Prince or Earl—
Till the sap of six Springs hath stirred!”

The Fool knew the Queen went sad on her ways,
Long after her tears had dried;
Though they of the Court forgot she had sighed,
When they heard her laugh if her hair
Rose and spread on the windy air,
Like a cloud shot with sunset rays . . .

Then at last, in due time, the Prince was born;
With the Winter snows he came;
For him, mother-love shed its tender flame
Over her snowdrop face; its light
Kindled to greet the poorest wight
Made by motherhood, less forlorn.

Six rainbow Springs rose the sap in the trees;
The Queen taught the Prince the flowers;
Through her hair, he peeped at the glinting showers
In the violets' eyes: he knew
The note of ev'ry bird that flew,
And the drones, from the honey-bees.

He came with the Winter snows . . . and with June,
With the first red rose, he died—
Sapped by a fever swift and strange . . . Beside
His body through one pearly night,
The Queen lay . . . and her hair was white,
When sunrise waked her from her swoon.

With Winter, the news of the King's return
Came suddenly to the Realm:
In the tears that the Fool watched overwhelm
The Queen, he knew she wept her gold,
She wept her face grown wan and old—
Beyond power of a kiss to burn . . .

Breasting the hillside, and led by the King,
The cortège of victors swept . . .
But when they neared the Palace gates, forth leapt
The Fool—"From this letter," he cried,
"Learn, before you venture inside,
That gold is a perishing thing!"

"*Since you saw the Queen*"—so the letter said—
"*A hand hath caressed her hair;*
Her guest—a King—drew her into his snare,
He wooed her long—he won at last—
He stole the sweetness from the past—
But their son, known as yours,—is dead."

The King rode on—though his face had gone grey
As the dim December sky . . .
Through the snow of the courtyard, silently,

He and his escort reached the door;
It opened, and across the floor,
Slowly, they saw a shadow sway . . .

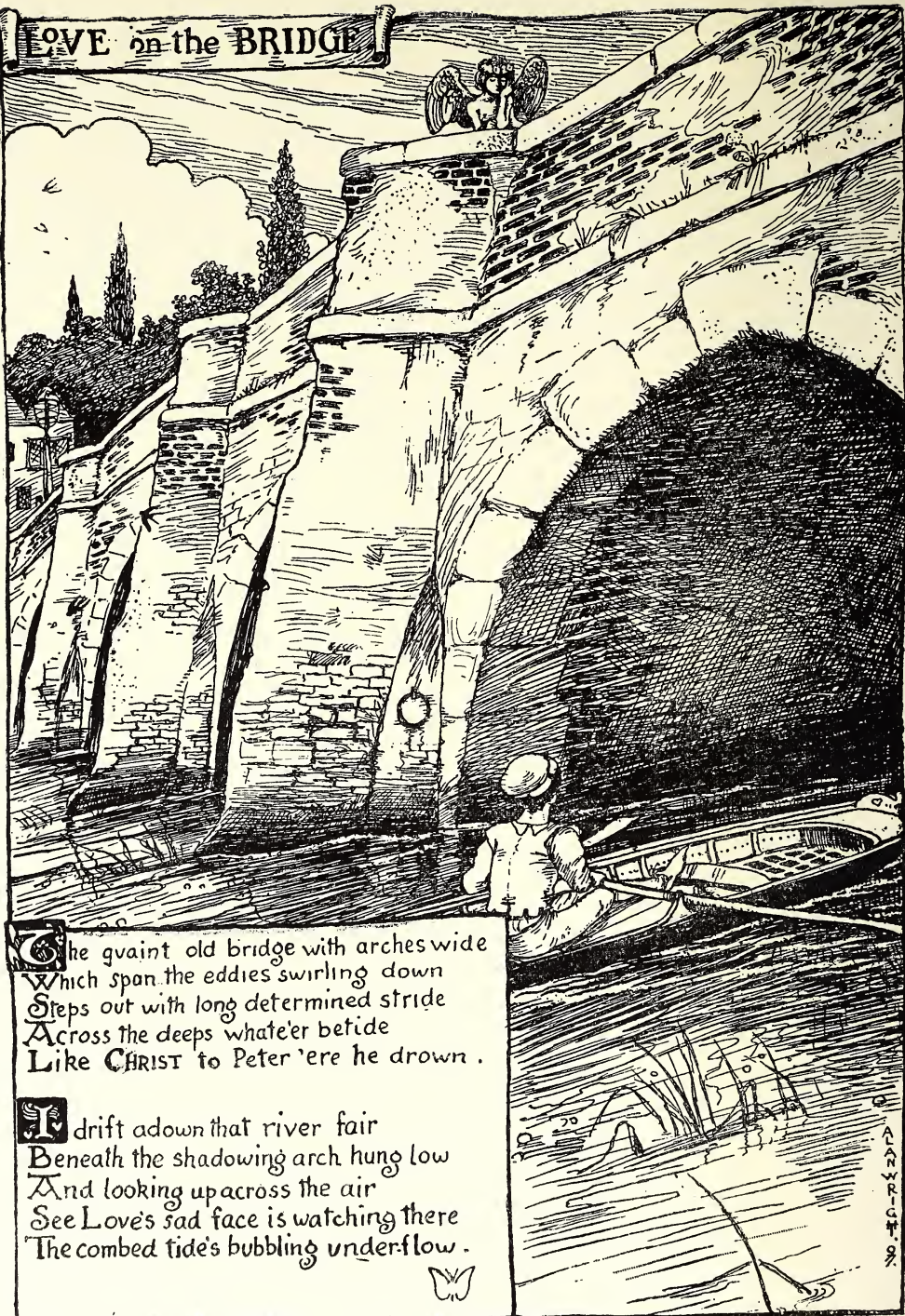
White, white as the snow on the Winter wold,
Her silver hair floated down;
She was robed in a silver gown; her crown
Was silver too . . . her snowdrop face
Showed, 'neath the snow-white strands, no trace
Of the shame the letter had told . . .

The Fool sprang forward, and clutched the King's arm,
As the King drew rein, entranced—
“'Twas King Sorrow wooed her!” he said—then danced
Into the firelit hall . . . the Queen,
Knowing nothing of what had been,
Yet shrank at his laugh in alarm.

“*King Sorrow hath wooed you . . . and dare I kiss
These lips he hath sealed more fair?*”—
Faltered the King; “This white witness of care,
Dare I draw it over my breast—
Dare I seek in its snows my rest?”
Said the Queen—“I have lived for this.”

Elsie Higginbotham.

LOVE on the BRIDGE



The quaint old bridge with arches wide
Which span the eddies swirling down
Steps out with long determined stride
Across the deeps whate'er betide
Like CHRIST to Peter 'ere he drown.

I drift adown that river fair
Beneath the shadowing arch hung low
And looking up across the air
See Love's sad face is watching there
The combed tide's bubbling underflow.



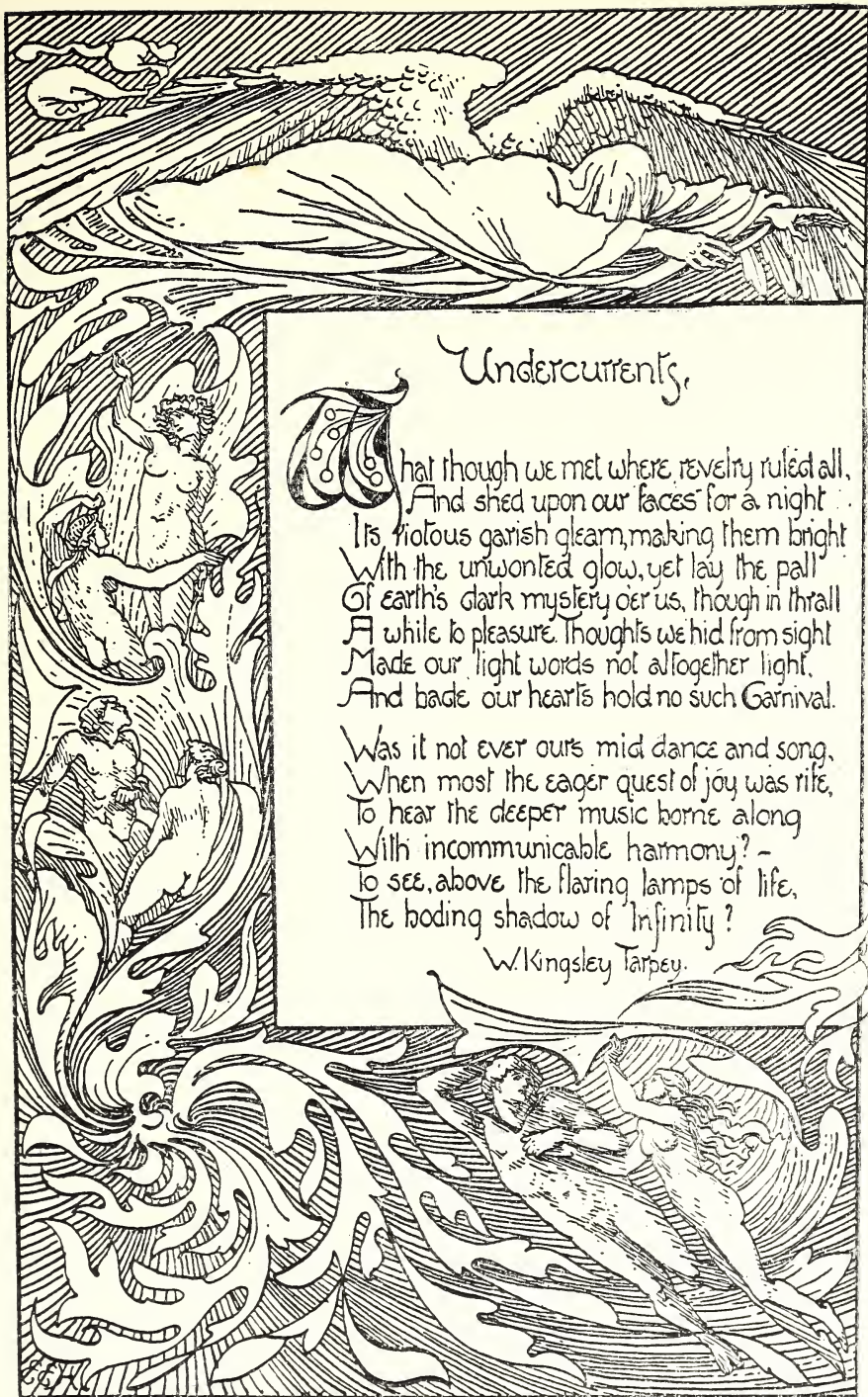


Our four eyes meet ; the evening skies,
Of clouded sapphire, cannot show
Such orbs as those twin lustrous eyes —
Fulfilled of tears 'stilled from Love's sighs—
That gaze into mine eyes below

Beneath that passionate patient gaze
My reverent head I sadly bow,
To see the wan face -imaged- blaze,
Drawn in the swift tide's tangled maze ;
But lust there stains the pale pure brow.

The quaint old bridge for centuries yet,
Shall cross the stream with giant stride ;
But never-more with vain regret
Will Love gaze from its parapet
On the foul face set in the tide .





Undercurrents.

What though we met where revelry ruled all,
And shed upon our faces for a night
Its riotous garish gleam, making them bright
With the unwonted glow, yet lay the pall
Of earth's dark mystery o'er us, though in thrall
A while to pleasure. Thoughts we hid from sight
Made our light words not altogether light,
And bade our hearts hold no such Carnival.

Was it not ever ours mid dance and song,
When most the eager quest of joy was rife,
To hear the deeper music borne along
With incommunicable harmony? -
To see, above the flaring lamps of life,
The hoding shadow of Infinity?

W. Kingsley Tarpey.

THE MOUNTAIN

BEGOTTEN of the elemental strife ;
Born of the pristine travail of the earth ;
And heaved tremendous from the fiery womb,—
Above the seething fen and marshy flat,
Above the moaning level of the sea,
I rose impetuous to the early stars.

Time laid his slow, cool fingers on my brow,
And stayed the pulsing heat ; and crowned, with crown
Of snow eternal, and eternal calm,
I towered imperial over deep, green vale,
And over sweeping gold of plains that spread
To murmurous waters glittering in the west.

From out my side tempestuous rivers gushed,
And hewing with sheer force their chasmèd way,
Down to broad pastures flowing largesse bore :
Then, to the lonely crying of the sea
Responding, in majestic progress swept
Into oblivion of the brimming flood.

About my slopes the clambering forests thronged,
And raised fair banners to the wind, a space
To front the slow, deliberate siege of time ;
To fall,—and, from the ruin rear again
New plumèd splendour springing out of death,
In fitful triumph over waiting graves.

Beneath my shade the transient cities stirred,
And muttered out their little day, and fell
By fierce devouring flame, or sudden storm
Of conquering hosts; or ripened to decay;
But still new cities from the ashes spring
To lurid fate, or curse of lingering death;

Ever new armies move across the plain
To petty tumult; and about the seas
The futile fleets of ships for ever ride,
The sport of wind and wave, on empty quest.
A bubble on the pool, the dream of man
Rounds for a radiant moment and is gone.

The ages pass me as a puff of wind,
And all the years as idle breezes spent;
Serene above the fretful change, I cleave
Eternity with snowy pinnacle:
Regal in youth, though ancient as the sea,
I rise unchanging to eternal stars.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

LA BEALE ISOUD IN A LAZAR-COTE

WHEN in the bird-soft night unwares
The rotting rain-pool here that bears
Thick green and purple sliminess,
Dull-blotched as on a long-dead face,
Blooms to a privacy of stars ;

When in the peach-soft green-touched night
Tall trees unseen sleep shivering-slight,
Lean hooded writhers come no more
To peer within this green sty-door
From eyeholes deep that hold no light ;

Then all the dwale that shoots within
This grave-strait weed-choked garth of sin
Feels cool as the gold day-lilies
That ebb far down one dim-grown bliss
Where love has often wandered in ;

The scabs that on this lead pool float
Faint to such leaves as lift and shut
O'er water-lily buds unlit,
Whereunder slip wan stars that flit
Like swallows down one rippling moat.

O days when I felt sweet, alas,
Of eyes and mouth in one soul's glass,
And sweet of tresses golden-swart ;
When love had lifted high my heart,
As the priest lifts the pyx at mass ;

When in that moated red-walled rood
Of cypress and pale flowers we stood
Mid orris clasped and bergamot—
I lay on cloves, who now have got
A swine's litter of straw mildewed.

O dead, dead, dead, in that dear close
Upstares his blake face hacked by those
Who drave me roped to this unease
Where through the black dense sodden trees
I watch God's dreadful daylight ooze.

Gordon Bottomley.

UNDER THE DOME

I HAVE just finished reading proofs of this "Summer Number" of *The Dome*, and, frankly, I don't think much of it. Or rather, I think a great deal. With half a dozen stories and a pair of "decorated" poems, I don't know what *The Dome* is coming to. Where it is going to were easier to express.

I note with pain that Architecture is unrepresented in this "Summer Number" save by a single plate. Music, too, for the first time is recognised only in a critical paper, and nobody's Nocturne, Impromptu, Mazurka, Valse, Minuet, or Album-leaf is reproduced. The Editor tells me that the short stories have crowded Music and Architecture out, and that both of them will be found going strong in the next number, which is to contain several architectural drawings and articles, and a Musical Supplement.

The composers of the music printed in the last two numbers of *The Dome* are the two men most talked about in musical circles just now. Mr. Isidore de Lara's *Messaline* will be produced (largely through the efforts of *The Dome* and *The Chord*) at Covent Garden a few days after this precious "Summer Number" appears; and Mr. Delius' music is still being eagerly discussed.

Speaking of Mr. Delius, I am asked to say that the song published in the June *Dome* has now been republished in sheet form by The Concorde Concert Control, Wardour Street, W., together with some other, and, I think, far better songs.

As Architecture and Music and I are crowded out by the stories of this "Summer Number," I am going to insist that the Editor shall make up his Autumn Number mainly of Architecture, Music, and Me. I therefore reserve several brilliant things which might otherwise have adorned this page.

*Here ends Volume Three of THE DOME. New Series.
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